



2<sup>nd</sup> April, 2008

## DECLARE & DEFEND

Two hands from today's Wednesday Game, one to test your declarer skills, the other your defense.

### Declare ...

<p>♠ AQ632 ♥ 74 ♦ AQ2 ♣ 983</p> <p>♠ T5 ♥ QT85 ♦ ♣ AQJT542</p>	<p><b>Board 16</b> Hands Rotated for Convenience</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>North</th> <th>East</th> <th>South</th> <th>West</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>1♠</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>2♣</td> <td>Pass</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2♦</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>3♣</td> <td>Pass</td> </tr> <tr> <td>3♥</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>3NT</td> <td>Pass</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Pass</td> <td>Pass</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	North	East	South	West	1♠	Pass	2♣	Pass	2♦	Pass	3♣	Pass	3♥	Pass	3NT	Pass	Pass	Pass		
North	East	South	West																		
1♠	Pass	2♣	Pass																		
2♦	Pass	3♣	Pass																		
3♥	Pass	3NT	Pass																		
Pass	Pass																				

South's Club suit encourages some aggressive bidding and 3NT is reached on just 21 HCP's.

West leads the Heart Six to East's King and the Three is returned. What card do you play? If West's lead is 4<sup>th</sup> best then he must have both the A♥ and J♥, in which case one might think that it makes no difference whether Declarer plays Q♥ or T♥. But, it does matter! West knows from that first trick play of the K♥ that East does not have the Q♥, but West has no such knowledge of the whereabouts of the T♥. So, as a matter of routine, Declarer plays the Q♥ at Trick Two. She doesn't know whether it will help her cause, she is simply "playing the card she is known to hold", thereby revealing as little information as possible to the defenders.

West wins this trick with the A♥, cashes the J♥, and plays a 4<sup>th</sup> Heart to Declarer's Ten. When Dummy went down it looked as if the contract might depend on a successful Club finesse, but now that Declarer has a Heart trick in the bank only 6 Clubs are needed. Obviously Declarer won't jeopardize this now-cold contract by taking the Club finesse. Instead, she'll play the Clubs from her hand. But

she won't start with the A♣, it would be most embarrassing if one defender had all three missing Clubs and were to duck the second round of the suit. If so, the Club suit is shut out and ignominious undertricks will follow. This is the full hand:

	<p>♠ AQ632 ♥ 74 ♦ AQ2 ♣ 983</p>	
<p>♠ K9 ♥ AJ96 ♦ T8763 ♣ K7</p>	<p><i>Dummy</i></p> <p><i>Declarer</i></p>	<p>♠ J874 ♥ K32 ♦ KJ954 ♣ 6</p>
	<p>♠ T5 ♥ QT85 ♦ ♣ AQJT542</p>	

It turns out that neither defender has the feared holding of 3 Clubs, but 9 tricks will be close to a top board. Maybe even 10 tricks! Put yourself in West's shoes. He's already gone wrong in the play of the Hearts (see below), and may well do so in Clubs. When Declarer leads the suspicious-looking Q♣ from his hand, West may smell a rat which isn't there. He might well play low for fear that East has the singleton A♣! Oops, now the contract that West had beat will now make an overtrick!

West could be forgiven for cashing that J♥ at Trick Three, from his point of view his partner could have started with ♥ K32 or ♥ KT83. But when East plays the Two on that third round of the suit the position was crystal clear, it was obvious that Declarer was the one with the T♥. West must change plan, and instead of blindly continuing Hearts a prompt shift to a Diamond was required.

Playing "the card you are known to hold" can also be effective on defense. Consider this suit:

	AQ754	
KJ6		T32
	98	

Suppose that this is a side-suit and that Declarer is trying to set up Dummy's suit before drawing trumps. The finesse of the Queen works, then the Ace is cashed. West must play the King here, the card he is known to hold, giving Declarer a guess as to whether to ruff the third round of the suit high or low. If West plays the Jack, Declarer can ruff low with impunity.

## ... Defend

♠ QJ ♥ AK762 ♦ 654 ♣ K54	North <i>Dummy - Declarer</i> South
<b>Board 31</b> Hands Rotated for Convenience	♠ AKT9542 ♥ ♦ T73 ♣ JT3

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
1♥	Pass	2♣	3♣
Pass	Pass	Dbl	Pass
4♣	Pass	5♣	Pass
Pass	Pass		

South's 3♣ had the desired effect of creating complications for N-S. East's Double simply said "Do something", and at any other vulnerability West would probably have passed. But, being Red vs White, he went in search of the game, and the partnership ends up in 5♣.

South cashes two Spades. What next? From the bidding Declarer surely has no more than two Hearts, so the third defensive trick must come from Diamonds or the trump suit. If Partner has a Club honor, then any defense works, but think what happens if Partner has the Nine! Now, South can concede a ruff and sluff by leading another Spade. If West is alert he will ruff with that hoped-for Nine, delivering an upper-cut. Declarer must overruff with an honor, promoting a trick for South's JT3. Here is the full deal:

	♠ 87 ♥ QT9854 ♦ Q98 ♣ 92	
♠ QJ ♥ AK762 ♦ 654 ♣ K54	North <i>Dummy - Declarer</i> South	♠ 63 ♥ J3 ♦ AKJ2 ♣ AQ876
	♠ AKT9542 ♥ ♦ T73 ♣ JT3	

Nice defense, but we should point out that it might turn out very badly! Declarer might have this hand:

♠ 63  
 ♥ J3  
 ♦ AK2  
 ♣ AQ9876

If this is Declarer's hand, then the attempt to get an upper-cut turns out to be fatal to the defense. This time there is no upper-cut but the ruff and sluff allows the Diamond loser to disappear.

Here's another example of a trump promotion, this one from the Wednesday game of 5<sup>th</sup> July, 2006.

	♠ A543 ♥ K32 ♦ 764 ♣ 742	
♠ J9 ♥ T976 ♦ JT3 ♣ AKT9	North <i>Dummy - Declarer</i> South	♠ Q2 ♥ J84 ♦ AQ9852 ♣ J8
	♠ KT876 ♥ AQ5 ♦ K ♣ Q653	

Against 3♣, West cashes the A♣. shifts to a Diamond won by East, then three more rounds of Clubs. On the last Club, Dummy can ruff high, but that gives the defense a natural trump trick.

Here's one more, from 2<sup>nd</sup> January, 2008:

	♠ J74 ♥ 862 ♦ KQT42 ♣ KJ	
♠ AQT8 ♥ J97 ♦ 93 ♣ T832	North <i>Dummy - Declarer</i> South	♠ K52 ♥ A4 ♦ AJ765 ♣ 976
	♠ 963 ♥ KQT53 ♦ 8 ♣ AQ54	

Against 2♥, West leads a Diamond to East's Ace. Then three rounds of Spades, followed by another Diamond. Now when East gets in with the A♥ he leads another Diamond for the *coup de grace*.