



16<sup>th</sup> April, 2008

## DECLARE & DEFEND

### Declare ...

This week we had lots of exciting slam hands, but it was slim pickings for interesting play-of-the-hand problems. So, we've recycled a couple of golden oldies with a common "Morton's Fork" theme.

♠ AT6 ♥ A72 ♦ QJ83 ♣ AK5	<b>From the Archives</b>  <b>Board 18, 19<sup>th</sup> July 2006</b>  <b>Final Contract: 4♠</b>  <b>Opening Lead: 4♣</b>
♠ Q9742 ♥ J9653 ♦ K7 ♣ 2	

This is not a good contract! There is a Diamond loser, and possibly two losers in each of the major suits. You win the A♣ at Trick One. What next? Before tackling the majors, you can try a Morton's Fork play in Diamonds. At Trick Two lead a low Diamond towards your hand, and observe East's dilemma. If he pops with the Ace, you get 3 tricks in Diamonds. And, if he plays low, the King will win, the other Diamond will get sluffed on the K♠, and the A♦ will wither on the vine.

	♠ AT6 ♥ A72 ♦ QJ83 ♣ AK5	
♠ 85 ♥ KQT ♦ 6542 ♣ J874	<i>Defender</i>  <i>Declarer</i>	♠ KJ3 ♥ 84 ♦ AT9 ♣ QT963
	♠ Q9742 ♥ J9653 ♦ K7 ♣ 2	

If East hops up with the A♦ at Trick 2, he should shift to a heart, which Declarer must duck. Then the continuation is won by the A♥ followed by a Spade towards the Queen. Now, whatever East does, Declarer will eventually get those Heart losers away on his minor suit winners. Note the importance of ducking the first round of Hearts.

The other prong of the Fork is not without interest. If East ducks the Diamond at Trick Two, the play goes: Spade to the Ace, K♣ (pitching a Diamond), low Spade won by East, Club ruff, lose a Heart to West, Diamond to the Queen and Ace and ruffed by Declarer, A♥ and out a Heart. Now, Dummy is able to handle the minor suit return, and, one way or the other, the contract will be made.

For our second Morton's Fork, we look at all 4 hands:

	♠ Q7 ♥ 87 ♦ AK642 ♣ K743	
♠ A865 ♥ 654 ♦ Q98 ♣ QT5		♠ JT432 ♥ J3 ♦ JT73 ♣ 86
	♠ K9 ♥ AKQT92 ♦ 5 ♣ AJ92	Board 31 June 7th, 2006

Against your 6♥ contract, West leads the 6♥, and East follows with the 3. 11 tricks are in plain view, can you avoid the Club finesse by setting up the Diamonds? Unless a sleepy defender lets you get to the board with the Q♣, you will be an entry short to set up the Diamonds. Did we really present this problem so that you could demonstrate your ability to take a losing Club finesse? No, of course not, the winning line is a variant of the Morton's Fork, putting the defender who holds the A♠ in an impossible dilemma ... after winning the opening Heart lead, cash the A♦, ruff a Diamond, and play the K♣. Whichever defender has the A♠ will be faced with two losing choices:

- If he takes the King with the Ace, then the Queen becomes the extra entry needed to set up the Diamonds

- If he ducks the King, he deprives Dummy of that entry. but now the Spade loser disappears on the K♦

## ... Defend

This week's "Defend" section is a little different, this time we show all 4 hands and ask you to figure out how E-W can beat 4♠ assuming "double dummy" play from both sides. If only for the record, here is the auction:

West	North	East	South
	1♠	Pass	1NT
Pass	2♠	Pass	3♠
Pass	4♠	Pass	Pass
Pass			

	♠ AQJ9862 ♥ T6 ♦ JT ♣ K4	
♠ KT4 ♥ AQ87 ♦ A543 ♣ 65		♠ 3 ♥ 952 ♦ Q8762 ♣ Q873
	♠ 75 ♥ KJ43 ♦ K9 ♣ AJT92	

Because Declarer (North) can also see all the cards we can assume that she will correctly guess the Diamond situation. That being the case the only 4 possible defensive tricks will be the K♠, ♥AQ and A♦. If the K♠ is to score a trick then Dummy must not be permitted a second entry, so West must be sure to withhold his A♦ if and when Declarer takes a Diamond finesse. Let's look at all four opening leads in turn:

*If East leads a Spade*, then things are easy for Declarer, now the trump suit can be picked up with only one entry to Dummy and it's 10 easy tricks for Declarer. That age-old advice about not leading one's singleton trump is borne out on this deal.

*If East leads a Heart*, then Declarer plays low from the board and West's Queen takes the trick. West does best to get out with a Club, anything else gives up the 10<sup>th</sup> trick immediately. Declarer spurns the "free" Club finesse and wins in hand with the King. Now she exits with a Heart won by West, and another Club comes back won on the board. Now

the K♥ is cashed (pitching a Diamond from hand), the Q♠ is finessed, and Declarer exits with a Diamond to West's Ace. As before, West is end-played into surrendering the 10<sup>th</sup> trick.

*If East leads a Diamond*, Dummy plays low and West withholds his Ace to prevent Dummy from getting that vital second entry (for the second Spade finesse). So, Declarer's J♦ wins the first trick, the K♣ is cashed, then a Club finesse, Spade finesse, and exit a Diamond to the Ace, which end-plays West:

- A Spade return sacrifices the trump trick;
- A Heart return sacrifices a Heart trick;
- A Diamond return concedes a ruff and discard ... a Heart is pitched from Declarer's hand, and the Diamond ruffed on the board, after which it is no fewer than 11 tricks for Declarer.

*If East leads a Club*, Dummy's Jack wins the trick. Now, Declarer has two Club entries to the board by overtaking the King on the second round of the suit. This is all that is needed for Declarer to pick up the trump suit and escape one of the 4 potential losers. So, yet again, it is 10 tricks for Declarer.

In all these lines Declarer makes 10 tricks, but Deep Finesse's double dummy analysis tells us that the defense can hold Declarer to just 9 tricks. Has Deep Finesse goofed for once in it's life? No, let's look one more time at the opening lead.

Instead of an opening lead of a *low* Club, how about trying the Club *Queen*! Nice try, but not good enough, Declarer wins the Ace and unblocks the King. Once again Declarer has two Club entries to the board and that is all that is required to pick up the trump suit.

Yes, that Club Queen lead was just for practice, what is really required is the opening lead of the *Diamond* Queen! Bingo! Now Declarer is forced to play Dummy's K♦ at Trick One, won by West's Ace. West exits with a Diamond and all his worries are over. Declarer will be unable to force a second entry to Dummy, and unable to engineer an end-play against West. In the fullness of time West will come to the K♠, A♥, Q♥ and A♦.