



4<sup>th</sup> June, 2008

## DECLARE & DEFEND

Some hands to test your Declarer skills and your defense.

### Declare ...

<p>♠ AQ82 ♥ Q7 ♦ A743 ♣ Q72</p> <p>♠ JT743 ♥ AT ♦ K92 ♣ 943</p>	<p><b>Board 17</b> Hands Rotated for Convenience</p> <table style="width: 100%; text-align: center;"> <tr> <td></td> <td>Pass</td> <td>1♦</td> <td>Pass</td> </tr> <tr> <td>1♠</td> <td>1NT</td> <td>2♠</td> <td>3♥</td> </tr> <tr> <td>3♣</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>Pass</td> <td>Pass</td> </tr> </table>		Pass	1♦	Pass	1♠	1NT	2♠	3♥	3♣	Pass	Pass	Pass
	Pass	1♦	Pass										
1♠	1NT	2♠	3♥										
3♣	Pass	Pass	Pass										

West, being a passed hand, showed the unbid suits with that 1NT bid, typically 5-5 but that's not guaranteed.

West leads the Diamond Six, which has all the appearances of a singleton. You win in hand with the K♦, finesse in trumps, and draw a second round (trumps are 2-2). How do you avoid losing three Clubs, a Heart and a Diamond?

The bidding and the play have been quite revealing. First, what is the distribution? West started life with two Spades and we suspect, from the opening lead, that he had a singleton Diamond. If that is the case then it looks as if West's distribution is 2=5=1=5.

How about the high cards? West passed originally, and has shown up with the K♠. It hardly seems likely that he also started with AK♣, most people nowadays would open that hand. And, anyway, holding AK♣, West's opening lead would no doubt have been a high Club. So, we'd be inclined to give West: ♠ Kx, ♥ Kxxxx, ♦ x, ♣ Kxxxx, or something similar. That being so, how do you proceed?

With the enemy hands virtually known, this has almost become a double dummy problem. The solution is to end play East and that requires that the Diamonds are eliminated first. So, Declarer loses a Diamond to East, wins the Heart return with the Ace, plays A♦ and ruffs a Diamond and exits with a Heart. This is the full layout:

	<p>♠ AQ82 ♥ Q7 ♦ A743 ♣ Q72</p>	
<p>♠ K6 ♥ K8632 ♦ 6 ♣ KT865</p>		<p>♠ 95 ♥ J954 ♦ QJT85 ♣ AJ</p>
	<p>♠ JT743 ♥ AT ♦ K92 ♣ 943</p>	

After West has won the K♥ he will be faced with this end-position:

	♠ A8
	♥
	♦
	♣ Q72
♠	♠
♥ 86	♥ J9
♦	♦ Q
♣ KT8	♣ AJ
	♠ T7
	♥
	♦
	♣ 943

Declarer has lost two tricks and must avoid the loss of 3 Clubs. If West leads a Heart, it's a ruff and sluff, with a Club loser going away. So, West leads a low Club, and Dummy must play low. If East wins with the Jack, he can cash the A♣ but must then concede a ruff and sluff. And if East wins the A♣, then Dummy's Queen will set up.

That wasn't terribly difficult, at least not for those Declarers who remembered the bidding and the early play, and constructed a picture of the missing hands. Once that was done, the end-play was just one small step away.

## ... Defend

There was a tragic lack of interesting defensive problems in this week's hands, so we dug up a couple of golden oldies from the Wednesday Game archives. They have a common theme, that of helping out Partner.

Here is Board 5 from 7<sup>th</sup> February, 2007. East opens 1NT, which is passed out. You lead the Spade Eight, and this is what you see:

♠ 4 ♥ QJT5 ♦ KT863 ♣ 952	
<b>Board 5</b> Hands Rotated for Convenience	♠ AJ982 ♥ 963 ♦ J2 ♣ AJ7

Partner wins the K♠, leads back the Three to Declarer's Ten and your Jack. When the A♠ brings down Declarer's Queen, you can count 5 Spades and the A♣. But that's not enough, where is the setting trick coming from? Declarer appears to have lots of potential red suit tricks, so perhaps the solution is to cash those 5 Spades, then the A♣, hoping that Partner has the K♣. Can you see anything better?

	♠ K753 ♥ 842 ♦ Q5 ♣ QT84	
♠ 4 ♥ QJT5 ♦ KT863 ♣ 952		♠ QT6 ♥ AK7 ♦ A974 ♣ K63
	♠ AJ982 ♥ 963 ♦ J2 ♣ AJ7	

Yes, the winning play is to play the *Two* of Spades on the 4<sup>th</sup> round of the suit, deliberately blocking the suit! Now Partner is forced to make the winning shift of a Club (hopefully the Ten), allowing the defense to score 5 Spades and 4 Clubs for down three. A heads-up play by South, one that might not occur to everyone in the heat of battle.

The second problem is from 19<sup>th</sup> December, 2007, Board 19:

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

♠ J9765 ♥ 64 ♦ 76 ♣ 6432	
<b>Board 19</b> Hands Rotated for Convenience	♠ T3 ♥ AT32 ♦ Q92 ♣ KQJT

You lead the K♣, Partner playing the Nine and Declarer the Eight. What next? No doubt Partner has the A♣, presumably not doubleton, with that holding he would have unblocked the Ace on the first trick. So, the best chance is that Partner started with 3 Clubs, that way the defense can take two Clubs and hopefully two Hearts. But don't lead the K♣ at Trick Two, that would give Partner a chance to go wrong. Continue with the *Ten* of Clubs, forcing Partner to win the trick and shift to a Heart. Here is the full deal:

	♠ Q8 ♥ QJ875 ♦ T43 ♣ A95	
♠ J9765 ♥ 64 ♦ 76 ♣ 6432		♠ AK42 ♥ K9 ♦ AKJ85 ♣ 87
	♠ T3 ♥ AT32 ♦ Q92 ♣ KQJT	

Look what happens if South continues with the K♣ at Trick Two. North might reasonably place South the ♣KQx, in which case he must duck the second Club, allowing the defense to score 3 Clubs and a Heart. But the T♣ should make it clear that a third cash is not cashing and that a Heart shift from the North side is required. As in the previous example, a thoughtful play from South makes it easy for Partner to do the right thing.