For Our Newer Players

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NSBC Develop Your Skills Sept-Oct 2022 Program with Anita Curtis

For information or to sign up email jessicabrakebridge@gmail.co

Online Wednesdays at 9.30am



Develop Your Skills (DYS) is for players who have completed the Build on the Basics course or who have been playing for at least one year. Bidding, declarer play & defence are targeted, with hand analysis to consolidate skills. Lessons will be held on-line on Wednesday mornings at 9.30am There will be a 6 week break from the end of July until mid-September.

ı	Date	Lesson Topic
	Wed Sep 14	How do I play this suit? (Declarer play)
	Wed Sep 21	Advancer's Options (Bidding)
	Wed Sep 28	Unblocking (Defence)
	Wed Oct 5	Hand Analysis 2 (all skills)
	Wed Oct 12	Cross ruffing (Declarer play)

Visitors \$20; Members \$17

For more information or to register, email Anita: ac210927@bigpond.net.au

Challenge Hand 1 (Bid and Play)

T	Nil Vol. De alar Cavilla
North	Nil Vul, Dealer South
♠ A6	
♥ A872	
♦ 942	Assuming you can reach the
♣ KQJ9	4S contract. The opening lead
South (D)	is the ♥K.
♠ KQJ875	is the VN.
♥ 5	
♦ A753	How do you play the hand?
♣ 75	

Challenge Hand 2 (Play)



Challenge Hand 3 (Play)

North	You are	You are South in a 4♠			
♦ 9743	contract,				
♥ AK84	Standard Bidding			g	
♦ Q9	West	North	East	you	
♣ T94				1•	
You	Pass	1♥	Pass	1♠	
AKT6	Pass	3♠	Pass	4♠	
y -	All Pass	All Pass			
♦ K6532	West leads the ♥Q When you win ♥A, what do				
♣ AJ87					
	you plan to discard on it?				

Bridge Puzzle

You are defending against the following auction:

SOUTH	NORTH
1∳	1♥
1≜	1NT
PASS	

A relevant question is what N–S tend to open holding 3–3 in the minors, they answer 1♣. How many diamonds is South likely to hold?



PO - Entry Management

Solution to challenge hand 1



It is from my book
"A Second Book of
Bridge Problems.".

Pat O'Connor

North	Standard Bidding			
♠ A6	West	North	East	South (D)
♥ A872				1∳
♦ 942	Pass	2♣	Pass	2♠
♣ KQJ9	Pass	4♠	All Pass	
South (D)	Bidding Notes			
♠ KQJ875	1♠ 5+♠, opening hand			hand
♥ 5	2♣ 4+♣, 10+ Hcp			
♦ A753	2♠	2♠ 6+♠, Min		
♣ 75	4♠	To Play		

West leads the ♥K.

How will you make ten tricks?

Analysis

You have four losers – three diamonds in your hand, and one club.

You could hope that the diamonds are split 3-3 but that is not likely (only about 36% chance).

Which is the best approach?

How will you manage your entries to the North hand?

The Full Deal

	North	
	. A6	
West	♥ A872	East
943	♦ 942	♠ T2
▼ KQT93	♣ KQJ9	♥ J64
◆ T6		◆ KQJ8
♣ T62	South (D)	♣ A843
	. KQJ875	
4 <u>.</u> /S	♥ 5	Vul Nil
Lead ♥K	♦ A753	Dir: S
	♣ 75	

You should aim to throw some diamond losers on dummy's long clubs. If you draw trumps immediately in three rounds and then lead a club towards dummy, the opponents, being clever people, will not take their ♣A until the second round. This will mean that you cannot access the nice winning clubs in dummy. Darn!

This is one of those hands where you have to develop your side suit before drawing trumps. It would be nice to be able to lead from your hand towards the high clubs in dummy, but you don't have the entries to do this safely, so:

- T1 Win the **YA** in dummy
- T2 Lead the ★K. The defenders will probably signal their club lengths to each other East will play the ♣8, showing an even number, and West the ♣2, showing an odd number. This will make it easy for East to figure out that most likely West has three clubs, and you have two, so East will hold up.
- T3 Lead the ♠Q, East wins ♠A on the second round of clubs.
- T4 Win the likely **♥J** return trumping in hand <u>◆5</u>
- T5/6 Then <u>★K</u>, <u>★A</u> drawing all except one of the remaining trumps, finishing on Table.
- T7 Cash ♣J and discard a diamond ◆3
- T8 Ruff a heart (high if trumps have split 3-2) to your hand
- T9 Draw the outstanding trump. This gives you ten tricks.

If they take the <u>*A</u> on the first round, draw all trumps and (on the above layout) make eleven tricks. If they hold up on both the first and second rounds, you have ten tricks – take the money and run.

You need clubs to be split 4-3 but this is a better chance (62%) than relying on a 3-3 split in diamonds.

Key Point

Delay drawing trumps if you need them as entries to a side suit.



PH – Some Leading Questions



Some Leading Questions

From Pat's Play and Learn Bulletin series, on the ACBL bridge feed website.

Pat Harrington

You are on lead versus a notrump contract. Partner has not bid. What suit are you likely to choose to lead? Your own long suit. What is the rationale for doing this? In a notrump contract, you hope to drive out any stoppers the opponents might have in that suit and regain the lead in time to cash winners.

Which card do you lead from your long suit? "Fourth from your longest and strongest" is a familiar guideline. But is fourth best always the right card to choose? Let us look at some long

suits you might hold and decide what card to lead. You will see only the suit you are leading, not your entire hand. Let us assume the following: your long suit is spades, South's 1NT opening bid was raised to 3NT, and your hand is not so strong that partner is likely to be broke. Choose your lead:

- 1) **•** A9753
- 2) 🛧 KJ86
- 3) **A** AQ942
- 4) ♠ KQJ96
- 5) ♠ QJT76) ♠ KQT5
- Fourth best is the suggested lead in (1) through (3): the 5, 6 and 4, respectively. In each case, you would love to find partner with an honour. Partner's job as third hand is to play that honour in an attempt to win the trick. The opponents have more strength and are more likely to hold the missing high cards, so there is a good chance partner will not be able to win the trick. Do not despair. You have told partner where your length and strength lie. If partner gets the lead, the return of your

suit could trap declarer's remaining high cards. Here is a possible layout for example (3):

	♠ 765	
. AQ942		≜ 83
	≜ KJT	

You are disappointed to see partner follow with the \$\int\$ 8 at trick one, but there is still hope. Declarer seldom has enough tricks to reel off to make his contract. Suppose declarer must set up tricks to make 3NT, and partner gains the lead. With one spade trick played, these are the remaining cards:

	♣ 76	
. AQ92		≜ 3
	∳ KJ	

What will happen when partner (such a good partner) returns your lead? Declarer's K-J might as well be the 3 and 2. That disappointing start resulted in four spade tricks for the defence — just what you wanted. Sometimes it takes a bit more work to set up your suit, but you have the idea.

Leading fourth best is not always a winning strategy, as with (4). Here is a possible scenario:

	. 742	
. KQJ96		≜ 83
	♠ AT5	

If you lead the fourth best ♠9, declarer wins with the ♠T, a trick he is not entitled to. How do you avoid being so generous? Do not lead fourth best. That lead is for players who need partner's help to set up their long suit. You can do the job yourself by leading a high spade. With a sequence of three or more touching high cards, lead the top — the ♠K. Now declarer gets the ace and only the ace —

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no cheap tricks here. You can follow this same guideline to lead the ♠Q from holding (5).

In a suit contract, you often lead the top with only two touching honours. In notrump you generally wait for three honours. You can usually afford to be a bit patient in notrump. When there are trumps, you must build your tricks quickly before declarer or dummy runs out of that suit, so you try to promote your meagre high cards quickly.

What do your instincts tell you to lead holding (6)? The A K will avoid giving away a cheap trick, but suppose you lead the A K and it wins? Will you be able to continue leading spades safely? Declarer frequently holds up on winning the opening lead. I hope you are wondering where the A and J are located. Here are two possibilities where you have led the K:

	. 742	
♠ KQT5		♦ 983
	. AJ6	

If declarer ducks at trick one, it is correct for you to continue leading spades because partner has the . J. But how do you know that?

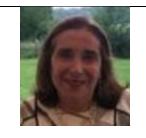
	◆ 742	
♠ KQT5		≜ J83
	♣ A96	

This time, declarer holds up on the A. Leading another spade does not give declarer a trick with the jack. But how do you know that? In both cases, partner is going to have to signal you about his spade holding.

- On the first hand partner should discourage ◆3
- On the second hand, partner should encourage ♠8

Here our concern is about choosing the best card to lead, and the best card is the king — even without three touching high cards. With enough power in the suit, we chose to lead, the lead of a high card can prevent declarer from winning a trick he doesn't deserve. When your suit includes two touching cards, one of which is the 10 or higher plus another non-touching honour, your best choice is usually the top of the touching high cards.

♦ JD – T2 is too late to start thinking



This article was based on a Bridge feed article "Trick 2
Too late to start thing" by

Joan Dziekanski.

Solution to challenge hand 3

As dealer, you hold the following hand:

and the bidding goes:

Standard Bidding			
West North East you			
			1♦
Pass	1♥	Pass	1♠
Pass	3♠	Pass	4♠
All Pass			

West leads the ♥Q, and this is what you see:

North
♥ AK84
♦ Q9
♣ T94
You
♠ AKT6
y -
♦ K6532
♣ AJ87

When you win ♥A, what do you plan to discard on it?

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A diamond, of course!. Clubs can be played by utilizing the **double finesse** for split honours, with a 75% chance of success, that is, you play one opponent to have the $\clubsuit K$ and the other to have the $\clubsuit Q$. It's possible, of course, that one opponent has both club honours, but the opening lead makes it unlikely that West has both. With that holding, West may well have led the $\clubsuit K$ instead of the $\P Q$, a suit your partner bid.

T1 West leads ♥Q, you win <u>▼A</u> discarding ◆2.

So, do you draw trump at trick two, or do you use the dummy entry for another play?

You should play a club at trick two, using the reasoning above.

- T2 When you play the ♣T, East follows low, and West wins the ♣K.
- T3 West continues with the ♥J, using the principle of doing no harm by risking giving up a trick by breaking a new suit. You win the ♥K, you again discard a diamond ♦3 from your hand
- T4 You now play the <u>♣9</u> from dummy, <u>♣5</u>, <u>♣8</u>, <u>♣3</u>. It wins – you have the club suit under control.

Now is the time to start drawing trumps.

T5 You play the **♠3** from the dummy, and East plays the **♠Q**. you win **♠A**, **♠2**

That was a **very significant card** from East. It would not be surprising if the ♠Q is a singleton, and if so, this means that West has ♠J852. You should stop drawing trumps. You may want to use some of dummy's low trumps to ruff your long diamonds. Even if West is short in diamonds too, the ♠9 in dummy is higher than all of West's spades (except the ♠J, a natural winner for the defence). In general, you must keep control of the trump suit with a 4–1 break.

Therefore, you play a diamond ◆5 towards the ◆Q next, which wins!.

This strongly suggests that West ducked the
◆A perhaps hoping East had the ◆K.

- T7 Next play the club off dummy, ♣4, ♣Q to the ♣A in your hand, West following ♣6.
- T8 So back in hand, you now lead the high club ♣J. and West trumps low ♠5 to prevent you from discarding dummy's last diamond, so you overruff this with the ♠7.
- T9 When you next play dummy's ◆9, East covering ◆T your ◆K, West winning the ◆A
- T10 West cannot play trumps without giving up his natural trump winner. So, West exits another heart ♥5, which you trump with the ♠6 in your hand.
- T11 You can then lead your last diamond ◆6
 West ◆J ruffing with the ◆3 in dummy.
- T12 You can ruff dummy's last heart, hoping to score the ♠T in your hand, but West overruffs with the ♠J.
- T13 Your remaining card is the high trump ♠K.

Success! You played every suit carefully and enjoyed making 10 tricks even though spades broke 4–1. Here is the full deal:

	North	
	• 9743	
West	♥ AK84	East
. J852	+ Q9	. Q
♥ QJ5	♣ T94	▼ T97632
+ AJ4		◆ T87
♣ K63	South (D)	♣ Q52
	♠ AKT6	
4 <u>♣</u> /S	v -	Vul Nil
Lead ♥Q	♦ K6532	Dir: S
	♣ AJ87	

◆ JF – Hand Analysis (X or Overcall)



Julian Foster (many times NSW representative) analysing (bidding & play) on an interesting hand from a club session. Sourced SBC Wisdom articles.

	North	Dealer: East
	♠ AKJ7	Vul: EW
West	▼ T 75	East (D)
.	♦ KQT72	▲ T842
♥ K983	♣ 8	♥ AJ4
♦ 854		♦ A6
♣ KQJT72	South	♣ A963
13	♠ Q9653	
	♥ Q62	N 1 - S 1 -
9 13	♦ J 93	E 7 15 - 2
5	♣ 54	W 7 15 - 2

A Board in a club game, had quite a variety of contracts with a few pairs scoring game East West.

The normal start to the auction is

1♣ Pass 1♥.

One or two Wests raised clubs immediately, but it is better to look for a major suit heart fit first

North then has the first decision. The field was roughly evenly split between a **takeout double** and **overcalling 2**. I would have chosen to double, for a few reasons:

- It's showing both the other suits as opposed to only one – so more chance of our side competing.
- It gets spades into the auction now at a safer level. Imagine overcalling 2→ and then hearing 3♥ or something come back to you – you will now feel a bit uncomfortable bidding again, but you will also feel you haven't really shown your hand as your spades haven't been mentioned.
- At this vulnerability if partner has spades, we might have a cheap sacrifice over their possible 4♥ contract.

1♣ Pass 1♥. X

After the double from North, East may choose to **rebid 1NT or pass** (but see advanced section for a way to show 3 hearts).

1♣ Pass 1♥. X Pass ?

Where East passes South will have to bid 1♠.

1♣ Pass 1♥. X 1NT ?

here South will surely pass.

West will now want to show some club support. This can get confusing because it's not always clear whether West has longer hearts or clubs and East might give "preference" back to hearts! (See advanced section for some possible methods here)

If West bids 2♣ and East goes back to hearts, West should now bid 3♣ to try to get across that they didn't have 5 hearts to start with.

Pairs playing in clubs by East usually made 11 tricks after a diamond lead. The natural line is to draw trumps and try a heart to the ♥J which loses. The defence then cash one more diamond but that's all because West's third diamond is ruffed in East.
On a spade lead, 12 tricks should be made. You can ruff in West hand, again draw trumps

and take a losing heart finesse. But now if the defence switch to diamonds it's too late.

Declarer wins the •A and tries •AK. When hearts split 3-3, the 13th heart in West is a winner on which the •6 can be discarded.

Now both West's remaining diamonds can be ruffed in East hand. 12 tricks are good, but Deep Finesse can in fact make all 13 tricks on any lead! See advanced section for how.

1♣ Pass 1♥. 2♦

Where North overcalled 2♦, some Easts could make a **support double** (showing 3 card heart support). West retreated to 3♣ but North-South may end up competing further to 3♦. If East find a spade lead this will play horribly as West will ruff and can get East back in in both clubs and hearts more for 2 more spade ruffs. With the ▼K & ◆A still to

come! In practice, however, East isn't very likely to lead a spade – a club or partner's heart suit is more normal but there is still time to beat the contract quite easily.

When East West did play in game in hearts, they had a chance to score 11 tricks for +650 and outscore the +600 that pairs in 5♣ were typically making. After the normal spade lead ruffed, declarer tries a heart to the **V** (losing to the **Q**) followed no doubt by a 2nd spade. This reduces the West hand to just the ♥K. But if declarer puts all his eggs in one basket, he cashes that ♥K, then crosses to a minor suit ace and tries the ♥A. When that draws both remaining trumps, the clubs provide lots more winners. If of course the trumps had not split 3-3, you'd be going a lot off as you would have run out of trumps and the defence can take all their spade tricks! The only pair who tried 4♥ unfortunately didn't try to draw the trumps and ended up going 4 off!

Key points to note

- Prefer to respond 1 major rather than raising a minor initially – you should explore for a major suit fit first.
- When you have a choice of overcalling or doubling after the opponents have bid two suits, doubling is frequently more flexible as it implies both suits which gives your side a better chance of competing in the auction.
- It is possible to play support doubles and support redoubles to show 3 card support for responders' major (but make sure you and your partner have a clear agreement!)
- A "backward" finesse is an unusual way of playing a suit that can sometimes work when you know a regular finesse will be wrong (see advanced section)

More advanced

After the auction

1♣ Pass 1♥. X XX

some pairs play that a redouble shows 3 card heart support — analogous to a support double. Other pairs keep redouble for its more traditional meaning — "I have a good hand and I think they are in trouble"! This is

obviously important to discuss with your partner – redoubles are not an area you want to have a major accident with – they tend to be very expensive!

In an auction like this one where West responds 1 major, it can sometimes be hard to get across to partner that, once you have failed to find a fit in the major, you now actually want to play in the minor. After all, from East's point of view if West responded 1♥ and then bid 2♣, they could easily have 5 hearts and only 4 clubs – East will naturally then want to return to a heart contract. In a case where East rebids 1NT (as they would do here without any interference from North), some pairs play a method where 2NT is a relay to 3♣. That caters for this sort of hand where you only have 4 of the major and, having discovered partner doesn't have support for it, you now want to return to play in 3♣ (if you want to invite in no-trumps, you bid checkback and follow up with 2NT). Others agree 34 is weak like this hand and, if you have a good hand with clubs, you need to go via another route (for example play 2way checkback so you can start an artificial game force and then show clubs).

So how do East West make all 13 tricks in clubs? On this hand it's double dummy but it can be done with what is known as a "backward finesse". Declarer has to start playing the heart suit by running the VJ from East on the first round!

If South covers, declarer wins and now runs the ♥9 from West which finesses North's ♥T. Because the suit is 3-3 that allows the 4th heart to discard the ♦6 from East and later ruff West's other two diamonds! Extremely lucky. On this hand there is no reason to try that though – taking a simple finesse hoping North has the ♥Q is perfectly normal.

Sometimes, however, a backwards finesse can be the only chance. That usually arises in a situation where you virtually know from the auction, or the cards played to date that the relevant honour (usually the Q) has to be in one hand and the normal finesse will fail. Note, however, it only works when you have enough intermediate cards as well because you should assume the honour will be

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covered. Here for example declarer needs both the **v9** and **v8** to pick up the whole suit after the **vJ** has drawn the Q and K. Without those intermediate cards, the only hope then is to hope the honour falls doubleton offside.

•

EK – Take all your chances



This article was based on a Kantar 'Take all your chances" series article in the ACBL "Bridge Feed" website.

Solution to challenge hand 2

North	Standard Bidding			
▲ J9	West	North	East	South (D)
♥ K762				1NT
♦ KJT4	Pass	2♣	Pass	2∳
♣ K96	Pass	3NT	Α	II Pass
South (D)	Bidding Notes			
. AK	1NT 15-17 Bal			
♥ A53	2♣ Stayman			
♦ AQ95	2♦ No Major			
♣ 8754	3NT To Play			

After you open 1NT, partner responds 2♣ and you wind up in 3NT. West leads the ♠4. East plays the ♠6, standard count (2 or 4) Plan the play.

Preliminary Analysis

Winners: 2★+2♥+4+=8 1 Short

Top Losers: **♣A**

Strategies for 9 Tricks

You have eight top tricks with two chances for a ninth:

- leading up to the ♣K (50%)
- or playing for 3-3 hearts (36%)

Unfortunately, given the fragility of the spade position (you can only let them in one more time before their spades are established) you don't have time to try both. Which will it be?

When one line gives you a 50% chance and the other 36%, guess which one you should take. After cashing four diamonds, lead up to the **&K**.

Tip: When you don't have 'time' to give yourself two chances in the play, take the one that offers the best odds.

Notice that East's count card at trick one from the ♠7652 was second highest from four small, the highest card tends to show a doubleton—assuming a doubleton is possible.

	North	
	≜ J9	
West	♥ K762	East
♠ QT843	♦ KJT4	♣ 7652
♥ T8	♣ K96	♥ QJ94
→ 763		♦ 82
♣ AJ2	South (D)	♣ QT3
	▲ AK	
3NT/ S	♥ A53	Vul Nil
Lead •4	◆ AQ95	Dir: S
	♣ 8754	



◆ AR − Respond to Pre-emps − Spoil



Responding to Pre-empts – To Spoil!

Adapted from an Andrew Robson article from his ARBC website

The principle is the same whether responding to an overcall, a Weak Two opener, a Weak Three opener or a Weak Jump Overcall. Holding a weak hand with support, work out how many cards are held by the partnership and bid for that number of tricks. It's termed bidding to the level of the fit and it's a winning competitive bidding strategy — because of the Law of Total Tricks.

A word about Weak Jump Overcalls. Say an opponent opens 1 ♣. If you jump to 2♥, you're showing a hand which would have opened (a Weak) 2♥; if you jump to 3♥, you're showing a hand which would have opened 3♥. Simple and highly effective.

Back to responding to the level of the fit. Say partner opens (or indeed makes a Weak Jump overcall of) 3. Respond with these:

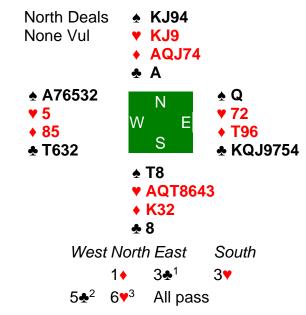
	- / I	
Hand i)	Hand ii)	Hand iii)
◆ 982	♠ AJ3	♠ KJ82
♥ 7	♥ 62	♥ QJ3
♦ QJ82	♦ KJ4	♦ 942
♣ A9432	◆ 98762	♣ QJ3

With the first, bid 5♦. There's an 11-card diamond fit, so bid for 11 tricks. You would do this non-vulnerable or vulnerable. But if your shape was duller, making two of your clubs into hearts, you'd be wise to settle for 4 ♦ if vulnerable.

With the second, raise to 4•, the (ten-card) level of the fit. Your opponents will now have to guess what to do at an uncomfortably high level.

With the third, you need to use your nous, because of the defensive nature of your hand together with the flat shape. 4•(doubled), the level of the fit, could lose a lot of tricks; and there's no guarantee the opponents are making game. The wise action is no action.

Pass. The level of the fit is a guide not a gospel.



- Weak jump overcall, like an opening bid of 3♣.
- Raising to the presumed 11-card level of the fit. I say presumed, although a 3♣ opener/Weak Jump overcall can be a good six-card suit. However, the fine 6421 shape makes jumping to 5♣ clear, even if it's one beyond the level of the fit. Make them guess!.
- Robbed of the chance to bid 4 NT to ask for aces, North makes his best guess. In fact, 6♥ was a good slam but it just did not make.

6♥ by South

Lead: **♠A**

West led ♠A (key play) v 6♥. After seeing trick one, he could judge whether to play partner for a singleton spade or switch (probably) to clubs. After ♠A, ♠4, ♠Q, ♠8, he knew precisely what to do (East wouldn't play ♠Q if he had a lower spade). He led ♠2 and East ruffed.

Down one.



AB – Bridge Puzzles



Bridge Puzzles 1
Augie Boehm

Bridge is primarily a game of language and logic. Of course, judgment and empathy play large roles, as does luck, at least in the short term. These puzzles feature language and logic. The idea is to deduce a significant amount of information from the bidding and opening lead.

You and your partner bid as follows:

YOU	PARTNER	
1+	1♥	
1≜	3♠	
4♠	PASS	

Your combined club holding is **\$J42** in hand facing **\$Q86** in dummy. The opening lead is a non club card. What is the likeliest location of the missing club honours?

SOLUTION

Most likely, West holds the ♣A and East the ♣K. Clubs is the one unbid suit, so a club lead is expected. If West had both top honours, or neither, a club lead is natural, absent a compelling lead in another side suit, such as a singleton. If West holds the ♣K, it is still quite normal to lead the suit: "Don't lead away from a king" is a discredited notion. Only the unsupported ♣A should dissuade West from attacking clubs. Once we deduce that the ace is probably with West, it follows that East must hold the king.

Sitting East, you witness the following auction:

SOUTH	NORTH
1NT	2♣
2♥	3NT
4♠	PASS

West, your partner, leads the **♣2**, fourth best, and below is the club position:

North (dummy)

♣ Q5

East (you) ♣ K974

Declarer calls for dummy's ♣5. Three questions:

- a. What is South's distribution?
- b. Where are the missing club picture cards?
- c. What do you play to trick one?

SOLUTION

- a. South is 4♣=4♥=2♠=3♣. South showed
 4–4 in the majors responding to
 Stayman, and partner's ♣2 lead means declarer started with three clubs, hence only two diamonds.
- b. South holds the ♣AJx; West wouldn't underlead an ace against a suit contract, which places the ♣A with South. If South started with ♣Axx, he would try the ♣Q from dummy at trick one as the only legitimate way to score the ♣Q if the leader holds the ♣K. Therefore, South holds the ♣J as well as the ace.
- c. Finesse your ♣9. Playing the king is futile and hands declarer three club tricks. By withholding the king at trick one (and covering the queen if led), the defenders save a club trick when opening leader is considerate enough to supply the ♣T.

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You are defending against the following auction:

SOUTH	NORTH
1♦	1♥
1≜	1NT
PASS	

A relevant question is what N–S tend to open holding 3–3 in the minors, they answer 1♣. How many diamonds is South likely to hold?

SOLUTION

Four or five diamonds. South has shown four spades and at most three hearts. With at least seven minor suit cards, the opening was 1, not 1. With 4–3–3–3 distribution, systemically opener would have started with 1. If South had six diamonds, he would presumably have rebid 2, over 1NT.

Opener's only possible distributions are:

4♠=3♥=4♦=2♣, 4♠=2♥=4♦=3♣, 4♠=1♥=4♦=4♣, 4♠=2♥=5♦=2♣, 4♠=1♥=5♦=3♣, 4♠=3♥=5♦=1♣.

(Note that the = symbol means suits are in the order specified. For example, 4–3–3–3 means the four-card suit can be any, but 4=3=3=3 means four spades and three each of the other suits.)



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