

DECLARER PLAY - WEEK 1
ASSIGNMENT ANSWERS

LAST REVISED ON AUGUST 30, 2019

1. For the deal on the left side of the front page:

- a. **South:** Has a balanced hand with 15 HCP and opens 1NT to describe a hand with 15-17 HCP and stoppers in at least three suits. (*North said "15-17"*)
North: Has a balanced hand with 11 HCP and knows the partnership has 26-28 (11+15 to 11+17) total points, enough strength for a game. Without a four-card or longer major, North jumps directly to game.
- b. The ♥5 should be fourth highest from West's longest and strongest suit. This means that West started with at least four hearts (probably five) with three higher than the five and at least one honor.
- c. Using the **Rule of 11** we know that East must have two hearts higher than the five.
- $$11 - 5 \text{ lead} = 6 - 3 \text{ higher in dummy} = 3 - 1 \text{ higher in hand} = 2 \text{ higher in East's hand}$$
- d. The most likely defensive strategy is to drive out your ♥Q and then run their remaining hearts.
- e. You can take seven sure tricks without giving up the lead, three spades and four clubs.

2. For the deal on the right side of the front page:

- a. **South:** Has a balanced hand with 17 HCP and opens 1NT to describe a hand with 15-17 HCP and stoppers in at least three suits. (*North said "15-17"*)
North: Has a balanced hand with 9 HCP and knows the partnership has 24-26 (9+15 to 9+17) total points, enough strength to invite a game. Given two four-card majors, North responds an artificial 2♣ to initiate the **Stayman Convention**.
South: Rebids an artificial 2♦ to deny having a four card major.
North: Without an eight-card major fit, North rebids 2NT to limit the hand to 8-9 HCP and invite South to bid the game.
South: Now knows the partnership has 25-26 (17+8 to 17+9) total points which should be enough to make a 3NT game.
- b. The ♣J should be the top of connecting honors in a three card sequence or broken sequence. Since South has the ♣87, West should have started with either ♣KJT_x or ♣JT9_x. There is a 31% chance that West has a fifth club.
- c. The lead does not give any concrete information about East's hand. But there is a 62% chance East has three clubs and a 31% chance East has two clubs. East might also have the King.
- d. The most likely defensive strategy is to drive out your club stoppers and then run the remaining clubs.
- e. If you are willing to play the ♣Q on the first trick (or the Ace if East plays the King), you have six sure tricks without giving up the lead, four hearts and two clubs.

3. For the deal on the left side of the back page:

- a. **East:** East opened **1♥** to describe a hand with 13-21 declarer points and at least five hearts.
South: Has 15 declarer points (14 HCP + 1 ♠ LSP) and overcalls **1♠** to describe a hand with 9-17 declarer points and at least five spades.
North: Has 8 dummy points (8 HCP) and advances the overcall to **2♠** to describe a hand with 6-10 dummy points and at least three spades.
South: Knows the partnership only has 21-25 (15+6 to 15+10) total points, which is not quite enough for a game. In addition, South has five quick losers (three clubs and two hearts), so South passes.
- b. Because West did not support East's opening bid, West either does not have at least six dummy points or does not have at least three hearts, or both. After the dummy is tabled, South knows that West has at most two hearts.
- c. East's opening bid implies at least five hearts. It is very likely that East started with ♥ **KJTxx**.
- d. West's ♥ **A** will take the first trick and then West will lead the second heart to East's King. East will lead a third heart to give West a ruff. Then it is likely that West will lead a club through the strength in the dummy toward possible weakness in declarer's hand.

4. For the deal on the right side of the back page:

- a. **South:** Has a balanced hand with 16 HCP and opens **1NT** to describe a hand with 15-17 HCP and stoppers in at least three suits. (*North said "15-17"*)
West: Overcalls **2♦** to describe a hand with at least 11 declarer points and a good five-card or longer diamond suit.
North: Has 12 declarer points and knows the partnership has 27-29 (12+15 to 12+17) total points with an eight-card heart fit, enough for a **4♥** game. But North wants South to transfer to hearts to make the strong hand the declarer. Since West stole North's bid, North makes a **stolen bid double** to initiate the **Jacoby Transfer** to hearts. (*South said "transfer"*)
South: Rebids ♥2 to accept the transfer.
North: Jumps to **4♥** to describe a hand with at least six hearts and enough strength to ensure a game.
- b. West must have at least five diamonds and at least 11 declarer points to make the overcall. It is likely that West started with ♦ **AKxxx**.
- c. Since East did not support West's overcall, East has a weak hand with very few high card points.
- d. West will likely take the first two tricks in diamonds. If East plays high-low to signal a doubleton, West may lead a third diamond in the hope that South will not ruff or will ruff with a low heart from the dummy. This might give East a chance to take the trick with a (higher) trump.