

DECLARER PLAY - WEEK 2
ASSIGNMENT ANSWERS

LAST REVISED ON SEPTEMBER 25, 2017

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

Listen: West's overcall means West has at least five clubs and probably ten or more high card points. East must have a very weak hand. Because partner's *stolen bid double* initiated *Stayman*, and partner did not support spades, partner must have four hearts.

Observe: The ♣K is probably top of connecting honors in a three card sequence or broken sequence. West should have at least three more clubs including the ♣Q and the ♣T. If opponents gain the lead after you play your ♣A, they might run their clubs and set the contract.

Pause: You must take 9 tricks.

Look: You have 9 sure winners (0 ♠ + 4 ♥ + 4 ♦ + 1 ♣).

Analyze: No extra tricks are needed and there is no safe way to establish an extra trick.

Execute: Take the first trick with the ♣A, then run the hearts and diamonds to make the contract.

The Guideline of 7 would suggest you holdup the ♣A until the second trick:

$$7 - 3 \text{ clubs in dummy} = 4 - 2 \text{ clubs in hand} = \text{holdup 2 times}$$

But, if you holdup the ♣A on the first trick, opponents might switch to spades which could defeat the contract. If you holdup the ♣A on the first and the second trick, there is a greater chance that opponents might switch to spades and defeat the contract.

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

Listen: The bidding is no help.

Observe: The ♣K is probably top of connecting honors in a three card sequence or broken sequence. West should have at least three more clubs including the ♣Q and either the ♣J or the ♣T. Opponents will probably run their clubs after the ♣A falls.

Pause: You must take 9 tricks.

Look: You have 9 sure winners (3 ♠ + 0 ♥ + 5 ♦ + 1 ♣).

Analyze: No extra tricks are needed and there is no safe way to establish an extra trick in hearts because you must lose one trick to promote the hearts. When opponents gain the lead with the ♥A, they could run their clubs to defeat the contract.

Execute: The nine missing clubs are most likely split 5-4 (59%) or 4-3 (31%) so there is no reason to holdup the ♣A. Take the first trick. Then cash your diamond and spade winners to make the contract. Finally, try to promote the hearts. You might get lucky and make an overtrick if opponents discard the wrong cards on your long diamond suit.

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

Listen: The bidding is no help.

Observe: The ♠Q is probably top of connecting honors in a three card sequence or broken sequence. West should have at least three more spades including the ♠J and either the ♠T

or ♠9. If opponents gain the lead after you play your ♠A and ♠K, they might run their spades and set the contract.

Pause: You must take 9 tricks.

Look: You have 6 sure winners (2 ♠ + 0 ♥ + 2 ♦ + 2 ♣).

Analyze: Can promote three hearts but must lose one trick. The threat suit is spades. If you take the first trick, you will still have a spade stopper so you can afford to give up the lead to promote the hearts.

Execute: Take the first trick with the ♠K, then lead the ♥J (lead from the short side). Continue leading hearts until the ♥A falls. When regain the lead take your winners and make the contract.

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

Listen: The bidding is no help.

Observe: The ♥5 is probably the fourth highest in longest and strongest suit. West should have the ♥A or the ♥Q (or both). Your opponents will probably try to run their hearts. By the **Rule of 11** East has two hearts higher than the five:

$$11 - 5 \text{ lead} = 6 - 1 \text{ in dummy} = 5 - 3 \text{ in hand} = 2 \text{ in East's hand}$$

Pause: You must take 7 tricks.

Look: You have 5 sure winners (0 ♠ + 1 ♥ + 0 ♦ + 4 ♣) if you are prepared to play the ♥K on the first trick.

Analyze: You can promote two diamonds by losing one trick. You might not be able to afford the loss but it is the only chance to make the contract.

Execute:

- ✓ If East plays the ♥A and returns a heart, holdup the ♥K which might exhaust East's hearts and improve your chance to make the contract if East has the ♦A. Then promote the diamonds and run the clubs.
- ✓ If East plays the ♥Q, take the trick with the ♥K, promote the diamonds, run the clubs and lead the ♥6 toward the ♥T to promote the ♥J.

It might be tempting to run the clubs before promoting the diamonds to force opponents to discard cards from other suits. You could safely run three clubs before the promotion but you might need to hold at least one club stopper to regain entry into your hand after the diamonds are promoted.