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A series of declarer-play deals, intended for V-Blue. Cloned from 584

VB#5 Y2 David Bird's 6 deals ACOL	Contract: 4S
Date: 07/10/2015	By: South
Dealer: North	Board #: 1
Play this hand online!	Vulnerable: None

	North	
	♠ K65	
	♥ Q85	
	♦ 86532	
	♣ J5	
West		East
♠ 82		♠ 973
♥ T74		♥ A963
♦ KQJ9		♦ T4
♣ Q942		♣ KT83
	South	
	♠ AQJT4	
	♥ KJ2	
	♦ A7	
	♣ A76	

This set of six deals is by our guest author David Bird from England.

This is (yet) another deal where you need to make a plan at the start. Good luck!

West	North	East	South
-	P	P	1♠
P	2♠	P	4♠
P	P	P	

Lead: ♦ K

You (South) play in 4♠ and West leads the ♦K. The key to success is in counting your winners and losers.

There are only nine winners (five Spades, two Hearts, one Diamond and one Club) so an extra winner has to be generated. This comes from a Club ruff in dummy - in the *short trump hand*. To prepare the groundwork you have to concede an early Club trick.

Suppose you had held ♣K 5 in the dummy and ♣A 7 6 in your hand. You could have scored a Club ruff immediately.

With only ♣J 5 in the dummy, you needed to give the defenders a trick in Clubs before you could score your ruff.


We mentioned that you could not afford to draw three rounds of trumps at the start, because you would then have had no trump in dummy for the planned Club ruff. In fact you could not afford to draw two rounds of trumps at the start either. If you did, East would draw a third round when you ducked a Club trick subsequently!



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VB#5 Y2 David Bird's 6 deals ACOL	Contract: 3N
Date: 07/10/2015	By: South
Dealer: East	Board #: 2
Play this hand online!	Vulnerable: N / S

	North	
	♠ 42	
	♥ 832	
	♦ AT863	
	♣ J85	
West		East
♠ JT965		♠ 873
♥ J974		♥ Q5
♦ K2		♦ QJ9
♣ Q3		♣ K9642
	South	
	♠ AKQ	
	♥ AKT6	
	♦ 754	
	♣ AT7	

When you play 3NT with 13 points opposite 12, you are likely to have several entries to each hand. With 20 points opposite 5, nearly all the entries will be in one hand.

You may then have to plan the play carefully.

West	North	East	South
-	-	P	2NT
P	3NT	P	P
P			

Lead: ♠ J

You South, play in 3NT and have to decide how to make best use of dummy's meagre collection of high cards. Essentially, how can you set up the Diamonds?

Establishing a suit at No-trumps may involve knocking out the defenders' high cards. On this deal, it requires a different technique - to duck a round or two, to exhaust the defenders' stoppers in the suit.

By holding up the ♦A until the third round you ensure that you have an entry to dummy to enjoy the two established extra tricks in Diamonds.



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VB#5 Y2 David Bird's 6 deals ACOL	Contract: 6S
Date: 07/10/2015	By: South
Dealer: South	Board #: 3
Play this hand online!	Vulnerable: E / W

North

♠ KJ54
♥ K3
♦ KT86
♣ 532

West

♠ 86
♥ J974
♦ A32
♣ QJT8



East

♠ 7
♥ QT52
♦ QJ954
♣ 964

South

♠ AQT932
♥ A86
♦ 7
♣ AK7

There are three main ways of avoiding a loser: finessing, ruffing and discarding. On this deal (where you bid ambitiously to a high level contract) you need to save yourself two losers and will have to use two of the three methods.

West	North	East	South
-	-	-	1♠
P	3♠	P	6♠
P	P	P	

Lead: ♣ Q

You started with three losers in your contract of 6♠. You avoided a Heart loser by **ruffing** it in dummy. It was not possible to ruff a Club, since both dummy and your hand contained three Clubs. Instead you had to use a different method of avoiding a loser - **discarding**. You led a Diamond towards the king, hoping to establish that card if West held the ♦A.

It made no difference whether West played the ♦A on the first round. If he did, you would enjoy a Club discard on the established ♦K. If West instead played low on the first round of Diamonds, you would not lose a Diamond trick and could afford to lose a Club.



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VB#5 Y2 David Bird's 6 deals ACOL	Contract: 4S By: South
Date: 07/10/2015	Board #: 4
Dealer: West	Vulnerable: All
Play this hand online!	

North
 ♠ KT52
 ♥ A73
 ♦ 98
 ♣ J873

West
 ♠ 84
 ♥ T8
 ♦ AKJ63
 ♣ QT52



East
 ♠ J7
 ♥ QJ954
 ♦ T542
 ♣ 96

South
 ♠ AQ963
 ♥ K62
 ♦ Q7
 ♣ AK4

As often happens, you play in a major-suit game and start with four potential losers. You must look for a plan that will allow you to reduce the number of losers to the three that you can afford.

West	North	East	South
P	P	P	1♠
P	2♠	P	4♠
P	P	P	

Lead: ♦ A

You play in 4♠ as South and are faced with a dummy where there are *wasted values* (it is rarely good news to have a mutual shortage, for example - here you both have a doubleton Diamond).

You can see four potential losers: Two Diamonds, one Heart and a Club.

This was another example of a deal where you had to **establish a discard**.

If dummy had held ♣Q J 8 3, you would have started with a surplus Club winner and it would have been easy to draw trumps and then discard a loser on the fourth round of Clubs. Here, on this layout, you had to do some work to create the surplus Club winner.

As we saw, there were various lies of the Club suit that would allow you to do this.



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VB#5 Y2 David Bird's 6 deals ACOL	Contract: 6H By: South
Date: 07/10/2015	Board #: 5
Dealer: North	Vulnerable: N / S
Play this hand online!	

West	North	East	South
-	1♣	P	2♥
P	3♥	P	4NT
P	5♦	P	6♥
P	P	P	


Lead: ♦ K

You, South as ever, blast your way into 6♥ after North opens the bidding and supports your suit.

When dummy goes down, though, there are nowhere near twelve available tricks.

You have plenty to do on this slam contract. You have to keep a trump entry (the ♥J) to dummy, to establish the clubs with a ruff, also you must remember to ruff the third round of clubs with a high trump.

A lot of effort, yes, but it is rewarded with a very big score at the end!

	North	
	♠ Q4	
	♥ J82	
	♦ J6	
	♣ AK8542	
West		East
♠ K865		♠ JT97
♥ 743		♥ 95
♦ KQT2		♦ 9843
♣ Q9		♣ JT3
	South	
	♠ A32	
	♥ AKQT6	
	♦ A75	
	♣ 76	

You push the boat out on this deal, bidding more forwardly than you normally do. (Perhaps I'm wrong and you always take an optimistic view during the auction!)


Anyway, you often have to back up such bidding with a careful effort in the play. Can you do it?



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VB#5 Y2 David Bird's 6 deals ACOL	Contract: 4S
Date: 07/10/2015	By: South
Dealer: East	Board #: 6
Play this hand online!	Vulnerable: E / W

	North	
	♠ AT52	
	♥ K73	
	♦ 987	
	♣ JT8	
West		East
♠ 8		♠ 743
♥ QJT94		♥ A5
♦ J632		♦ QT54
♣ 542		♣ A976
	South	
	♠ KQJ96	
	♥ 862	
	♦ AK	
	♣ KQ3	

Many contracts depend on **reading the cards**. What does that mean? It means that you judge (or sometimes just guess) how the defenders' cards lie.

It is not too difficult on this deal, provided you stop to think, but many inexperienced players would go down unnecessarily. Don't worry if turns out that you would have been one of them. Once you have seen the situation, you will always get it right in the future!

West	North	East	South
-	-	P	1♠
P	2♠	P	4♠
P	P	P	

Lead: ♥ Q

You reach 4♠ in quick time and West leads the ♥Q. This lead is bad news for you as it means that the ♥A is poised over the ♥K, ready to chop off his majesty's head. What can you do to avoid three Heart losers and the ♠A?

Whenever dummy holds the king of the suit that has been led (against a suit contract), think very carefully before playing it at Trick 1. Defenders do not - or at any rate **should** not - underlead aces against a suit contract.

Provided you play correctly on the first two tricks, and West does not hold the ♣A as an entry to give his partner a Heart ruff, you will make the contract.