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A series of six declarer-play deals, intended for V-Blue Year 2. SA version.

Y2 VBlue #7 David's Deals SA	Contract: 3N
Date: 03/07/2016	By: South
Dealer: North	Board #: 1
Play this hand online!	Vulnerable: None

	North	
	♠ 96	
	♥ AT64	
	♦ A52	
	♣ JT53	
West		East
♠ QJT832		♠ 754
♥ 932		♥ QJ8
♦ 8		♦ KT94
♣ Q96		♣ K84
	South	
	♠ AK	
	♥ K75	
	♦ QJ763	
	♣ A72	

This series of six deals is by David Bird of England.

Hand 1. Sometimes the cards lie well and you survive by choosing the second-best line.

Not on this deal!

West	North	East	South
-	P	P	1NT
P	2♣	P	2♦
P	3NT	P	P
P			

Lead: ♠ Q

We arrive in 3NT as South after a Stayman auction. West leads the ♠Q and we see that we have to set up Diamonds for our nine tricks.

As you can now see, we would go down if we ran the ♦Q to East's ♦K at trick two. He would clear the Spade suit and we would then have only eight tricks when Diamonds broke 4-1.

The correct play is to cash the ♦A at trick two (you never know, maybe the ♦K will fall...) and then lead up to the ♦Q J 7 6. When the ♦Q wins we can cross to dummy and lead another Diamond up to the ♦J, giving East no winning option. In all we take two Spades, two Hearts, four Diamonds and a Club.

We must play similarly when we have a suit of, say, ♦A 7 3 (dummy) opposite ♦Q J 6 2 (our hand). If we start incorrectly by leading the ♦Q, we'd need a 3-3 break to score three Diamond tricks, whoever holds the missing ♦K. We can improve our chances by cashing the ♦A and leading twice towards the ♦Q J. We'd then make the contract when Diamonds break 3-3 or East holds the ♦K.



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VB#7 Y2 David Bird's Deals. SA	Contract: 3N
Date: 03/07/2016	By: South
Dealer: East	Board #: 2
Play this hand online!	Vulnerable: N / S

West	North	East	South
-	-	P	1NT
P	3NT	P	P
P			

Lead: ♥ K

We reach 3NT after the briefest of auctions, and West leads the ♥K from his fine sequence.

We can see that we have to play on either Clubs or Diamonds for our contract.

When we have a choice of finesses to take, it is generally right to finesse into the **safe hand**. What does that mean?

After we have held up the Ace of the suit led for two rounds, winning the third round, we expect our right-hand opponent to have no cards left in the suit. He is known as the **safe hand** or safe defender, because he cannot do us any damage.

West, who has two Hearts ready to cash, is the **danger hand** or dangerous defender.

We should finesse into the *safe hand*, not into the *danger hand*. In this case that means taking the ♥A, crossing to a Spade and running the ♣Q. If East takes that with the ♣K then he has no Heart left (or, if he has, then Hearts were 4-4).

When East returns a Diamond there should be no temptation to take *that* finesse. With sufficient tricks for our contract we should take the ♦A and run for home.

North

♠ Q96
♥ A64
♦ JT5
♣ AJT5

West

♠ T32
♥ KQJ93
♦ K8
♣ 963



East

♠ 754
♥ 852
♦ 7432
♣ K84

South

♠ AKJ8
♥ T7
♦ AQ96
♣ Q72

On this deal you will come to a split in the pathway.

Take the correct turning and you will make the contract.


Choose the wrong path and... disaster awaits!



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VB#7 Y2 David Bird's Deals. SA	Contract: 4S
Date: 03/07/2016	By: South
Dealer: South	Board #: 3
Play this hand online!	Vulnerable: E / W

	North		
	♠ J73		
	♥ KQ62		
	♦ T94		
	♣ T43		
West		East	
♠ QT5		♠ 2	
♥ J854		♥ 973	
♦ J65		♦ Q8732	
♣ K85		♣ AQJ9	
	South		
	♠ AK9864		
	♥ AT		
	♦ AK		
	♣ 762		

You will play many, many deals where it is essential to make a plan right at the start.

In fact, the odds are high that you will play one such deal in the next minute or so!

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

Lead: ♥ 4

We arrive in 4♠ and West, with a dismal choice of leads, decides to try a low Heart. We can see immediately that we have three Club losers on the hand and maybe the defense have a trump trick.

It sometimes happens that we can benefit by winning the first trick in our hand with a higher card than is necessary. By winning trick one with the ♥A, we can lead the ♥10 to the dummy and score a further two Heart winners, discarding one of our Clubs. If instead we win mistakenly with the ♥10, we would score only two Heart tricks and go one down.

Suppose dummy held ♥K Q 6 2 and we held ♥A J. Again we should win with the ♥A, so that we could overtake the ♥J with the ♥Q later, should that prove necessary.



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VB#7 Y2 David Bird's Deals. SA	Contract: 6S
Date: 03/07/2016	By: South
Dealer: West	Board #: 4
Play this hand online!	Vulnerable: All

West	North	East	South
P	1♣	P	1♠
P	2♠	P	4NT
P	5♥	P	6♠
P	P	P	

Lead: ♥ 3

We arrive in 6♠ and West leads a Heart. How should we play the hand?

Well, the first rule of declaring is that we **count our tricks**. Here, we can see twelve, if we make the effort to do our chores (six Spades, one Heart, one Diamond and four Clubs). So, do we take the Heart finesse at trick one?

Suppose we were playing this deal in a duplicate pairs (match-point scoring). Some players might say to themselves: "At pairs scoring, I should finesse the ♥Q at trick one. If the finesse wins, I can draw trumps and throw away my last Heart on the Clubs. That would give me an overtrick."

It is not the right way to think. Firstly, not many players lead away from a King against a slam. It is too likely to give declarer an undeserved extra trick. Secondly, there may be plenty of pairs who have not even bid the slam.

Taking the finesse at trick one is an unnecessary risk - we should take the ♥A, draw trumps and claim our slam. If we do finesse we'd go down immediately as West would obtain a Heart ruff.

North

♠ J964
♥ AQ6
♦ J3
♣ AJ75

West

♠ 53
♥ 3
♦ K98642
♣ 9863



East

♠ 7
♥ KJ9854
♦ QT75
♣ T4

South

♠ AKQT82
♥ T72
♦ A
♣ KQ2

The opening lead is made and down goes the dummy.

What is the first thing that you do? OK, you thank partner for the dummy. Well, in that case what is the *second* thing that you do?

Right, you make a plan for the contract.



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VB#7 Y2 David Bird's Deals. SA	Contract: 4H
Date: 03/07/2016	By: South
Dealer: North	Board #: 5
Play this hand online!	Vulnerable: N / S

	North	
	♠ K732	
	♥ JT62	
	♦ Q7	
	♣ A43	
West		East
♠ JT65		♠ A984
♥ 8		♥ A7
♦ J6532		♦ T94
♣ KQJ		♣ T985
	South	
	♠ Q	
	♥ KQ9543	
	♦ AK8	
	♣ 762	

They say in London that the 134 bus always arrives two at a time.

Sometimes, on VuBridge a similar thing happens. You encounter two deals in a row where you need to make a good plan right at the start.

West	North	East	South
-	P	P	1♥
P	3♥	P	4♥
P	P	P	

Lead: ♣ K

Here we play in 4♥ after partner raises our six-card suit. West leads a Club and we can see that he has attacked us in a vulnerable spot. How can we avoid losing two Clubs and two major-suit Aces?

Now, unless there is a particular good reason not to, we should normally draw trumps straight away. However, on this deal there is a pressing reason why we should not play a trump immediately – namely that we will go down if we do!


We must play three rounds of Diamonds immediately, to **dump** of one of dummy's Club losers. Having done that, we can then draw trumps.



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VB#7 Y2 David Bird's Deals. SA	Contract: 4S
Date: 03/07/2016	By: South
Dealer: East	Board #: 6
Play this hand online!	Vulnerable: E / W

	North	
	♠ KJ7	
	♥ 632	
	♦ Q764	
	♣ J43	
West		East
♠ T62		♠ 83
♥ K94		♥ JT875
♦ T95		♦ J32
♣ AKQ8		♣ T95
	South	
	♠ AQ954	
	♥ AQ	
	♦ AK8	
	♣ 762	

Some players know how to treat an A Q combination. "Yes, we've learnt that already. You have to play low to the Queen!"

See if you think it's the right play on this deal.

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

Lead: ♣ A

We play in 4♠ and West makes a nuisance of himself by cashing the ♣A K Q. How should we play to make the rest of the tricks?

It is always a good idea to combine two chances of making a contract, rather than just relying on one chance.

Here we could test the Diamond suit first, to see if it divided 3-3. If no luck came from Diamonds, we could fall back on a finesse of the ♥Q.

We would make the contract if the Diamond suit broke 3-3, or if East held the ♥K. Two chances for the price of one!