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This series is about handling communications & entries. It also involves the use of overtaking plays so as to be in the right place at the right time. Part 1 of 2. ACOL version. Updated winter 2015.

| | |
|----------------------------------------|------------------|
| VB Y1 #8 Entries Part 1 ACOL | Contract: 3N |
| Date: 24/03/2016 | By: South |
| Dealer: North | Board #: 1 |
| Play this hand online! | Vulnerable: None |

| | | | |
|----------|--|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------|
| | | North | |
| | | ♠ 8542 | |
| | | ♥ KQ | |
| | | ♦ AK | |
| | | ♣ 65432 | |
| West | |  | East |
| ♠ K93 | | | ♠ AQ7 |
| ♥ 962 | | | ♥ T8743 |
| ♦ 6 | | | ♦ 98742 |
| ♣ KQT987 | | | ♣ |
| | | South | |
| | | ♠ JT6 | |
| | | ♥ AJ5 | |
| | | ♦ QJT53 | |
| | | ♣ AJ | |

This set of six deals (the first of two series in this issue of VBlue) is all about *Entries*. We have already given you a few deals in VuBridge where you have to be in the right hand at the right time; now – in these two sets of six deals – we are going to explain this idea in more detail.

As well as understanding the general term *entry* you will also have to understand the terms *blockage* and what it means to *overtake a trick*.

Hand 1 sets the scene by making use of all three of the terms *entry*, *blockage* and *overtaking*. Here, there are nine easy tricks in 3NT.

Did we say easy? Well, sort of...

| West | North | East | South |
|------|-------|------|-------|
| - | P | P | 1NT |
| P | 2NT | P | 3NT |
| P | P | P | |

Lead: ♣ K

Bidding.

After East Passes as dealer we open 1NT with 14 points and a 5-3-3-2 shape. Partner, with his 13 points and good five-card Diamond suit takes us straight to game.

1NT – 3NT is the way to bid many bridge hands, certainly this one.

Play.

West leads the ♠K from his attractive sequence and we pause awhile to **count** our *top tricks*. This Count shows us that we have nine tricks on top: one Spade, three Hearts and five Diamonds. When all our tricks are available to be cashed we adopt the "cut and run" strategy. There is no need to mess around.

Careless play would do us in, though. We need to examine the Diamonds carefully. We have five tricks in the suit, but entries are a bit of a problem. With our ♠A dislodged at trick one we have no way back to the winning Diamonds except the Diamonds themselves. In the last deal (Hand 1) we used an outside suit to gain access to our winners. This hand, we need to use the suit with our source of tricks as our "communications suit."

Notice that the ♦A K Q J 10 are all present. We start off by leading a low Diamond to the ♦J (*play the honours from the short suit first*) and continue with the ♦Q. Now, if we allow this to win the trick, the ♦A K 10 would be stranded in dummy, with no means of access. Don't fool yourself that you could ever reach them with a Jack – as soon as the opponents gain the lead they would bury you under a landslide of Spades.

So, we need to overtake the ♦J in dummy on the second round or the suit would be **blocked**. This means that we cannot stand a 5-1 split in the suit. Even though we hold the top five Diamonds we'd be defeated if one of the opponents held five Diamonds. Any five Diamonds. It's worth checking the truth of this.

[Now, here's a little advanced thinking. (Skip this paragraph if you prefer to). Look at the

Diamonds again; focus on dummy. Why not just play the ♦A, then the ♦K, dropping the ♦Q J on them? Why go to our hand for the first Diamond trick? Ah-ha! Take a look at the opposition's Diamonds, which are split 4-2. When there are six cards out against us, a 4-2 split is the most common lie. If we just slapped down dummy's two top Diamonds and followed with the ♦10, can you see how East's ♦9 would become a winner?]


Victory comes by *unblocking* the suit, *overtaking* a winner with another winner, and managing our *entries*. Now we are adding a little *counting* into the mix. You do remember **counting**...?



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| | |
|----------------------------------------|------------------|
| VB Y1 #8 Entries Part 1 ACOL | Contract: 3N |
| Date: 24/03/2016 | By: South |
| Dealer: East | Board #: 2 |
| Play this hand online! | Vulnerable: None |

| | | | | | |
|---------|--|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--|--------|--|
| | | North | | | |
| | | ♠ A4 | | | |
| | | ♥ J42 | | | |
| | | ♦ AKT52 | | | |
| | | ♣ J53 | | | |
| West | |  | | East | |
| ♠ KQJ82 | | | | ♠ 953 | |
| ♥ 965 | | | | ♥ QT83 | |
| ♦ 83 | | | | ♦ 9764 | |
| ♣ KT8 | | | | ♣ Q6 | |
| | | South | | | |
| | | ♠ T76 | | | |
| | | ♥ AK7 | | | |
| | | ♦ QJ | | | |
| | | ♣ A9742 | | | |

One of the traps for the unwary at this game is to isolate winners in one hand and be unable to cash them.

It happens to all of us but that doesn't make the embarrassment any less acute.

How can you avoid a pair of red ears here?

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

Lead: ♠ K

Bidding.

After East Passes as dealer we open 1NT with 14 points and a 5-3-3-2 shape. Partner, with his 13 points and good five-card Diamond suit takes us straight to game.

1NT – 3NT is the way to bid many bridge hands, certainly this one.

Play.

West leads the ♠K from his attractive sequence and we pause awhile to **count** our *top tricks*. This Count shows us that we have nine tricks on top: one Spade, three Hearts and five Diamonds. When all our tricks are available to be cashed we adopt the "cut and run" strategy. There is no need to mess around.

Careless play would do us in, though. We need to examine the Diamonds carefully. We have five tricks in the suit, but entries are a bit of a problem. With our ♠A dislodged at trick one we have no way back to the winning Diamonds except the Diamonds themselves. In the last deal (Hand 1) we used an outside suit to gain access to our winners. This hand, we need to use the suit with our source of tricks as our "communications suit."

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Diamonds again; focus on dummy. Why not just play the ♦A, then the ♦K, dropping the ♦Q J on them? Why go to our hand for the first Diamond trick? Ah-ha! Take a look at the opposition's Diamonds, which are split 4-2. When there are six cards out against us, a 4-2 split is the most common lie. If we just slapped down dummy's two top Diamonds and followed with the ♦10, can you see how East's ♦9 would become a winner?]

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| | |
|----------------------------------------|------------------|
| VB Y1 #8 Entries Part 1 ACOL | Contract: 3N |
| Date: 24/03/2016 | By: South |
| Dealer: South | Board #: 3 |
| Play this hand online! | Vulnerable: None |

| | | | | |
|---------|--|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--|----------|
| | | North | | |
| | | ♠ J8 | | |
| | | ♥ A3 | | |
| | | ♦ Q83 | | |
| | | ♣ AQ9852 | | |
| West | |  | | East |
| ♠ 62 | | | | ♠ QT9743 |
| ♥ KQJ96 | | | | ♥ 854 |
| ♦ A94 | | | | ♦ K7 |
| ♣ 643 | | | | ♣ T7 |
| | | South | | |
| | | ♠ AK5 | | |
| | | ♥ T72 | | |
| | | ♦ JT652 | | |
| | | ♣ KJ | | |

The bidding here is smooth and accurate.

What about the play? Can you avoid stranding winners on the table?

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

Lead: ♥ K

Bidding.

We open 1NT as dealer (12 points and a 5-3-3-2 shape) and this gives partner a small problem.

There are those (certainly not any of our VuBridgers!) who would look at the North hand and try to play the hand in Clubs rather than No-trumps. We know, however, that the way to riches and fame is through the highest scoring strain and we look for almost any excuse to be there.

The six-card suit should provide a useful *source of tricks* in No-trumps so North tries his luck in 3NT.

Play.

When we **Read the Lead** of the ♥K, we know West has led from a long string of Heart honours. We begin our **Count** and **Plan** with a count of *top tricks*, which is mandatory in No-trumps.

We have two Spades, one Heart, no Diamonds and four Clubs. That's a total of seven. Assuming that the Clubs "run" (by breaking in friendly fashion) we might up that total by two – we may be able to cash six Club tricks.

If Clubs behave nicely we have nine tricks off the top, so our strategy is to **cut and run**. We plan the order in which to play the tricks, paying special attention to the Club suit. With six Clubs in dummy, our strategy has to include entries.

With the ♥A surgically removed from dummy after the opening lead we cannot afford to take the ♠K and the ♠J as winners. One of them has to be **overtaken** in dummy to avoid getting **blocked** in the closed hand. We have no entries in dummy except the Club suit itself.

The problem that this causes, though, is that we have to rely on a favourable Club break. The Clubs have to split nicely – 3-2 or the ♠10 falling singleton. Put another way, either the ♣10 comes down quickly or we go down slowly.

So at trick two we play a Club to our ♣K in

hand, then *overtake* our ♣J in dummy at trick three. On this trick we anxiously scan what the opponents do. If one of them shows out then 3NT is going off. (Probably two off, in point of fact). However, here the ♣10 falls on the second round so we can cheer up.


The next few tricks are Club winners with discards of Hearts and Diamonds from our hand. (How do we know what to discard? If it's not a winner and can't "grow up" it's a discard).

With seven tricks in the bag all we need are two more and the top Spades provide those. After that – well, who cares? We bag nine tricks with our *cut and run* strategy and it's time to allow the opponents their turn. They duly mop up the rest.



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| | |
|----------------------------------------|------------------|
| VB Y1 #8 Entries Part 1 ACOL | Contract: 2N |
| Date: 24/03/2016 | By: South |
| Dealer: West | Board #: 4 |
| Play this hand online! | Vulnerable: None |

| | | | | |
|--------|--|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--|---------|
| | | North | | |
| | | ♠ A83 | | |
| | | ♥ 42 | | |
| | | ♦ AJ962 | | |
| | | ♣ Q52 | | |
| West | |  | | East |
| ♠ KQJT | | | | ♠ 95 |
| ♥ J8 | | | | ♥ Q9653 |
| ♦ 8743 | | | | ♦ T5 |
| ♣ A63 | | | | ♣ KT74 |
| | | South | | |
| | | ♠ 7642 | | |
| | | ♥ AKT7 | | |
| | | ♦ KQ | | |
| | | ♣ J98 | | |

Hands 2 and 3 have neatly set the scene for this deal.

So, what do you need to make your contract?
What splits will allow you to succeed?

| West | North | East | South |
|------|-------|------|-------|
| P | P | P | 1NT |
| P | 2NT | P | P |
| P | | | |

Lead: ♠ K

Bidding.

After three Passes we open 1NT on our 4-4-3-2 hand containing 13 points. Partner, a Passed hand, remember, now gives that a gentle raise to 2NT.

Well, we have the buck passed to us now. Do we advance to game or do we Pass the hand out in 2NT?

With 12 points we'd Pass, with 14 points we'd advance to 3NT. With 13 points we seek inspiration and try to make a case for an upgrade.

Here, there is no case for calling this collection of 13 points, 14 points. The Spades are lousy, the ♦K Q doubleton is more a liability than a bonus and the ♠J is not likely to be pulling its weight. We suggest that a downgrade is more appropriate than an upgrade...

With that view in mind we regard Pass as being clear-cut. 2NT it remains.

Play.

West has an easy lead of the ♠K and we must **Count** and **Plan**.

Our initial count of *top tricks* shows one Spade, two Hearts and (with luck) five Diamonds. That's eight on top and that's all we need as we Passed out 2NT.

Now, on a friendlier lead we'd have an easy time. We could cash the ♦K Q, cross to the table using the ♠A as an **outside entry**, and revert to Diamonds. Only an unwelcome and unlucky 5-1 Diamond split would cause us any problems.

However, this West is not blessed with the spirit of friendliness. His ♠K lead is about to dislodge the ♠A from dummy and that will remove the all-important *entry* to the long suit. You may think of **not** taking the ♠A but that would only delay the inevitable. West would continue with Spades, forcing the ♠A at trick two or trick three. So we may as well take the ♠A at trick one and plan from there. Well?

Our revised count of top tricks shows that there are just six – one Spade, two Hearts and three Diamonds. The only way to play Diamonds (with dummy having no **outside entry**) is to cash the ♦K and overtake the ♦Q before cashing the ♦J. That gives three Diamonds on top.

To make more Diamond tricks (to swell the coffers to five) we need a favourable split. If Diamonds are 3-3 then the remaining ♦9 6 would be established as winners. A further (small but significant) chance is if one opponent started with ♦10 × and his partner with four low cards. This would also allow five Diamond tricks. Regardless – we still need fortune on our side.


Anyway – the fate of the hand is in the lap of the gods. We take the Spade lead and play a Diamond to the ♦Q and then the ♦K, overtaking with the ♦A. What we do see – oh frabjous joy! – is the ♦10 coming down in two. This leaves the ♦J 9 and the baby ♦6 all as winners.

We cash the Diamonds rapidly and gratefully and secure the contract with two Heart winners.


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| | |
|----------------------------------------|------------------|
| VB Y1 #8 Entries Part 1 ACOL | Contract: 3N |
| Date: 24/03/2016 | By: South |
| Dealer: North | Board #: 5 |
| Play this hand online! | Vulnerable: None |

| | | | | |
|----------|--|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--|--------|
| | | North | | |
| | | ♠ KJ3 | | |
| | | ♥ Q8 | | |
| | | ♦ K2 | | |
| | | ♣ Q76432 | | |
| West | |  | | East |
| ♠ T98752 | | | | ♠ 64 |
| ♥ K963 | | | | ♥ AJ52 |
| ♦ Q84 | | | | ♦ AJ6 |
| ♣ | | | | ♣ T985 |
| | | South | | |
| | | ♠ AQ | | |
| | | ♥ T74 | | |
| | | ♦ T9753 | | |
| | | ♣ AKJ | | |

You reach a dubious game contract after partner takes an interesting view in the bidding. *'Twas ever thus.*

What about the play? Can you steer your boat through choppy waters? The hand may look trivial to play but be warned. It isn't.

| West | North | East | South |
|------|-------|------|-------|
| - | P | P | 1NT |
| P | 2NT | P | 3NT |
| P | P | P | |

Lead: ♠ T

Bidding.

Partner Passes as dealer (the correct choice, in our opinion). Some players would open the bidding with that hand (11 points and a six-card suit) but we think it's hideous to open 1♣ when the main suit is so feeble, and a minor to boot.

Anyway, we are allowed to open 1NT (14 points and a 5·3·3·2 shape) after two Passes.

Partner now gives that an invitational raise to 2NT, passing the buck once more. Well, should we advance to game or should we Pass the hand out in 2NT?

With a full 14 points and a five-card suit we have a maximum for a 1NT opening bid. On that basis it's clear-cut to try 3NT.

Play.

West leads the top of his Spade sequence (the ♠10) and we pause to study the dummy and to count our *top tricks*.

The highlight of this hand is the six-card Club suit. We've got the nine winners we need right off the top after this Spade lead (six Clubs and three Spades), but we have two suits to manage.

In passing, West could have beaten 3NT by leading a Heart initially. The defenders could have gobbled up the first four Heart tricks and followed that with three Diamond winners. Oops! However, it's not West's fault that he was dealt a six-card suit and chose to lead it. Wouldn't you have done so? We certainly would have.

Anyway, back to the plot. The Clubs look easy to cash. We'd take the ♣A K and then overtake the ♣J to run the rest of the suit. No problem, unless...? Unless Clubs split 4-0 in which case this plan would prove nugatory. Now we could not overtake the ♣J as East would make a trick with his ♣10.

Our first order of business should be to think which card should win trick one. That has to be the ♠A, thereby *unblocking* the suit. Be careful

to note that taking trick one with the ♠Q would sink our boat before we leave the harbour. Next we cash the ♠A and note the evil 4-0 split. So we take the other two top Club winners to unblock **that** suit.

At trick five, we return to the dummy by *overtaking* our ♠Q with dummy's ♠K. And we continue to take our winners, three remaining Clubs and the ♠J.

With the job done we concede the rest, graciously of course.



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| | |
|----------------------------------------|------------------|
| VB Y1 #8 Entries Part 1 ACOL | Contract: 3N |
| Date: 24/03/2016 | By: South |
| Dealer: East | Board #: 6 |
| Play this hand online! | Vulnerable: None |

North

♠ A763

♥ 985

♦ KJ

♣ KQ65

West

♠ K82

♥ QJ62

♦ A743

♣ T3



East

♠ JT94

♥ KT3

♦ 85

♣ J872

South

♠ Q5

♥ A74

♦ QT962

♣ A94

You reach a routine contract in routine fashion. So far so very easy.

The play, though, needs a modicum of thought. How do you avoid stranding winners in one hand?

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

Lead: ♥ 2

Bidding.

After East Passes as dealer we open 1NT with 12 points and a 5-3-3-2 shape. Partner, with his 13 points and balanced hand, raises immediately to game.

Play.

West leads the ♥2 and our **count** of *top tricks* shows one Spade, one Heart and three Clubs for five **on top**. We need four more and we can see that if we can establish our Diamonds, we'll have the four tricks we need.

The problem, of course, is going to be about *entries* and *unblocking*.

We take the ♥A at trick one over East's ♥K and have to set about Diamonds. At trick two, we play to the ♦K (**not** the ♦J) and at trick three we must *overtake* our ♦J with the ♦Q in our hand. Otherwise, we would be blocked. Note that the defenders cannily refuse to take the ♦K with the ♦A and would certainly refuse to take the ♦J if we didn't overtake it with the ♦Q.

Once the opponents take the ♦A, we are at the mercy of further Heart leads. If East-West can cash four more Heart tricks we are down – we'd have to shrug our shoulders and get on with our lives. Here, though, Hearts split 4-3 (something we might have guessed from the opening lead of the ♥2) and West can only cash three Hearts.

When West has finished cashing his winners he has to hand the lead back. We take the Club switch in hand, cash the remaining Diamonds and dummy is high.

Nine tricks come from one Spade, one Heart, four Diamonds and three Clubs.