




www.vubridge.com

Deals 7-12 from Seres 619 V-Blue newsletters

VB#11 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	
	♠ 965	
	♥ 65	
	♦ A542	
	♣ AT52	
West		East
♠ QJ8		♠ 2
♥ J94		♥ KQT72
♦ JT93		♦ Q86
♣ KQ8		♣ J643
	South	
	♠ AKT743	
	♥ A83	
	♦ K7	
	♣ 97	

This set of six deals is by our guest author David Bird. There is no real theme to these hands, except that you must avoid falling into carefully set traps! Enjoy.

To avoid mistakes, you must sometimes look into the future and imagine what the defenders might do if the cards lie in a particular way.

West	North	East	South
-	P	P	1♠
P	2♠	P	3♥
P	4♠	P	P
P			

Lead: ♦ J

The contract is 4♠ played by South against the ♦J lead by West.

There are three important lessons on this deal.

The first is that 2♠ is a better response to 1♠ on that North hand than 1NT. Hands with Aces tend to play better in a suit contract than in No-trumps (and the only other possible response would be 1NT).

The second is that the South hand is easily worth a game-try after 1♠ – 2♠, despite its modest point-count.

The third lesson is that you should be careful of drawing too many rounds of trumps when you need to take a ruff in the dummy. If you play the ♠A and ♠K here, the defenders may remove dummy's last trump when you subsequently give up a Heart trick.

To make 4♠ you must lose a Heart trick before playing both top trumps. This way you can take a ruff in the dummy (the short trump hand, you should note). Playing off the ♠A is fine but then you must lose your inevitable Heart loser, either by playing off the ♥A and another or by ducking a Heart.


Ten tricks come from five Spade tricks in hand, one ruff on the table, the ♥A, the ♦A K and the ♣A.



www.vubridge.com

Deals 7-12 from Seres 619 V-Blue newsletters

VB#11 David Bird's 6 deals ACOL	Contract: 6S
Date: 07/10/2015	By: South
Dealer: East	Board #: 2
Play this hand online!	Vulnerable: N / S

	North	
	♠ KT62	
	♥ KQ32	
	♦ A76	
	♣ A7	
West		East
♠ Q84		♠ 7
♥ T854		♥ 97
♦ JT83		♦ Q95
♣ T6		♣ KQJ9543
	South	
	♠ AJ953	
	♥ AJ6	
	♦ K42	
	♣ 82	

The opponents' bidding will often give you assistance when you end up playing a contract your way.

On this deal East will open with a pre-empt. Bear that in mind when you play the hand.

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

Lead: ♣ T

You (South) reach 6♠ after East opens 3♣ and you venture into the auction with an aggressive 3♠ overcall. When dummy is displayed it is clear that you have an unavoidable Club loser and that success hinges on not losing a trick in trumps.

You will play many, many deals where you have to guess the position of a queen. When you are missing four cards in the suit and there is no distributional information, you will normally play for the drop. This will give you a 52% chance of being right.

If you have the slightest information that one of the defenders is longer than his partner in some other suit (for example, he has opened with a pre-empt or made an overcall) you should play that hand for shortage in the trump suit and finesse the other defender for the missing queen.

Every good player knows this. By following this advice you will make hundreds of extra contracts over your bridge career!



www.vubridge.com

Deals 7-12 from Seres 619 V-Blue newsletters

VB#11 David Bird's 6 deals ACOL	Contract: 3N
Date: 07/10/2015	By: South
Dealer: South	Board #: 3
Play this hand online!	Vulnerable: E / W

	North	
	♠ Q3	
	♥ A75	
	♦ KQ876	
	♣ Q92	
West		East
♠ T74		♠ AKJ9
♥ J9832		♥ KT6
♦ T2		♦ 95
♣ T64		♣ J853
	South	
	♠ 8652	
	♥ Q4	
	♦ AJ43	
	♣ AK7	

Every bridge player makes mistakes, yes, but sometimes you can be left thinking: "Why on earth did I do that?"

Make sure you do not end up saying something similar on this deal!

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

Lead: ♥ 3

West leads the ♥3 against 3NT. If you look at the Heart suit in isolation, what could be more natural than to play low? By running the lead to your ♥Q you would ensure that you make two Heart tricks.

Yes, but on this occasion, East will win with the ♥K and play the ♠A, ♠K and the ♠J. When the ♠10 falls from West, the ♠9 will be the defenders' fifth trick.

"Well, that would be a bit unlucky", some players might say. So it would, but there is no need to take risks like that. The essence of **Planning** is **Counting**. Here, when dummy goes down, you can count nine tricks (to wit: one Heart, five Diamonds and three Clubs).

It's not worth very much to make an overtrick in 3NT (except in match-point pairs). Your first objective should be to ensure the contract.



www.vubridge.com

Deals 7-12 from Seres 619 V-Blue newsletters

VB#11 David Bird's 6 deals ACOL	Contract: 4S
Date: 07/10/2015	By: South
Dealer: West	Board #: 4
Play this hand online!	Vulnerable: All

West	North	East	South
1♣	X	P	2♠
P	3♠	P	4♠
P	P	P	

Lead: ♦ Q

You (South) arrive in 4♠ having made a jump response to partner's take-out Double.

North
 ♠ KQJT
 ♥ KQ63
 ♦ A54
 ♣ 73

West
 ♠ 3
 ♥ AJT4
 ♦ QJT
 ♣ A9852



East
 ♠ 985
 ♥ 982
 ♦ 9732
 ♣ KT6

South
 ♠ A7642
 ♥ 75
 ♦ K86
 ♣ QJ4

They key to good declarer play lies in making a **plan**. There are many players who play a few tricks, get into trouble and - halfway through the hand - pause to make a plan.

It is not a winning strategy!

This was a typical deal where you need to make a plan right at the start. The winning play is to lead twice towards dummy's ♥K Q 6 3, hoping to set up a discard for your Diamond loser.

It is essential to win the Diamond lead in your hand, so that you can make the first of these Heart leads towards dummy. If, instead, you win the first trick with dummy's ♦A, you will go down. You would have to use the ♦K as an entry for the second Heart lead and this would leave you with no protection in Diamonds. (The ♠7 6 4 2 in your hand are such small pips that they do not give you a further entry).


On most deals where you hold nine solid trumps between you, you would draw trumps straight away. You cannot do that here because it would prevent you from leading Hearts twice towards the dummy.



www.vubridge.com

Deals 7-12 from Seres 619 V-Blue newsletters

VB#11 David Bird's 6 deals ACOL	Contract: 4H
Date: 07/10/2015	By: South
Dealer: North	Board #: 5
Play this hand online!	Vulnerable: N / S

	North	
	♠ A73	
	♥ Q32	
	♦ 632	
	♣ Q962	
West		East
♠ JT952		♠ K86
♥ 6		♥ 754
♦ AT98		♦ QJ5
♣ 875		♣ JT43
	South	
	♠ Q4	
	♥ AKJT98	
	♦ K74	
	♣ AK	

It's all very well taking a risk when there is no alternative.

When you can avoid taking a risk, you should grab the opportunity.

West	North	East	South
-	P	P	2♥
P	3♥	P	4♥
P	P	P	

Lead: ♠ J

You reach 4♥ after the rare chance to open with a strong 2♥ and West leads the ♠J against your contract. Should you play high or low from the dummy?

To answer this question you must make a **plan** for the whole hand. You do this, in a suit contract, by counting the potential losers in the long-trump hand. Here you start with one in Spades, none in Hearts, three in Diamonds and none in Clubs. You have four possible losers and must reduce this to three. How can this be done?

Looking at the Spade suit alone, you have the chance of running the opening ♠J lead to your hand. This will save you a Spade loser if West has led from the ♠K J 10. In Diamonds you will lose only two tricks if East holds the ♦A. What plan should you make, looking at the whole deal?

You should plan to discard a Spade on the surplus Club winner in dummy. Playing a low Spade from dummy at Trick 1 will risk the contract! East may win with the ♠K and switch to a Diamond *through* the king, allowing the defenders to score three Diamond tricks.


Instead you should rise with the ♠A and play the ace and king of trumps. When Hearts break 3-1, you play the ♣A and ♣K. You then cross to the ♥Q, drawing the last trump, and discard the ♠Q on dummy's ♣Q. Ten tricks are then guaranteed. You can lead towards the ♦K, seeking an overtrick, but on this occasion West holds the ♦A.



www.vubridge.com

Deals 7-12 from Seres 619 V-Blue newsletters

VB#11 David Bird's 6 deals ACOL	Contract: 6S By: South
Date: 07/10/2015	Board #: 6
Dealer: East	Vulnerable: E / W
Play this hand online!	

	North	
	♠ J3	
	♥ 753	
	♦ 875	
	♣ A9752	
West		East
♠ T74		♠ 92
♥ QJT8		♥ 962
♦ T43		♦ K962
♣ KT4		♣ QJ86
	South	
	♠ AKQ865	
	♥ AK4	
	♦ AQJ	
	♣ 3	

What is the most important thing to learn about declarer play? That you should draw trumps straight away? That you should hold up an ace in No-trumps? No.

The most important thing to remember is that you should always make a **plan** at the start.

When you are playing in a suit contract, you begin by counting the potential losers in the long-trump hand. You must then look for the safest way to reduce them to the number that you can afford.

West	North	East	South
-	-	P	2♣
P	2♦	P	2♠
P	3♣	P	3♠
P	5♠	P	6♠
P	P	P	

Lead: ♥ Q

North bids aggressively and you reach a borderline slam. West leads the ♥Q and you can see a potential loser in both Hearts and Diamonds.

There is little prospect of avoiding a Heart loser, so you will have to hope that you can finesse in Diamonds and find East with the ♦K.

You have two entries to dummy: the ♠J and the ♣A. You will have to use these to take two Diamond finesses.

You win the Heart lead, play the ace and jack of trumps and finesse the ♦Q. Yes, it wins! You draw the last trump and return to dummy with the ♣A. A second Diamond finesse wins and the slam is made.

If you make the mistake of drawing three rounds of trumps at the start, you will go down. With only one entry left to dummy (the ♣A), you will only be able to finesse once in Diamonds.