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Clone of series 1964; ACOL Version

VB#21 Y2 David Bird's hands ACOL	Contract: 4S
Date: 07/10/2015	By: South
Dealer: North	Board #: 1
Play this hand online!	Vulnerable: None

	North	
	♠ J964	
	♥ T42	
	♦ Q87	
	♣ A76	
West		East
♠ 532		♠ T
♥ KJ953		♥ Q86
♦ T632		♦ A94
♣ 9		♣ KJ8532
	South	
	♠ AKQ87	
	♥ A7	
	♦ KJ5	
	♣ QT4	

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

Hand 1: The original declarer fared poorly on this deal. See if you can do better!

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

Lead: ♣ 9

You reach game in Spades after a brief auction and West leads the ♣9. This is a reassuring lead because it means that East holds the ♠K. What can possibly go wrong?

The original declarer provided the answer to this! He played low from dummy and East won with the ♠K. East returned the ♣2 (his **lowest** Club to indicate that he would like a return in the **lower** remaining side suit, should West ruff the second round of Clubs). West ruffed, returned a Diamond to the Ace and scored a second Club ruff. Declarer had to lose a Heart trick eventually and that was two down.

Declarer could have made the contract by winning the first trick in dummy and drawing trumps. At a later stage he would lead towards the ♠Q to set up his tenth trick.

(You should draw trumps with the Ace, King and Queen, so that the ♠J will remain as an entry to dummy and allow you to lead a Club towards your hand).



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VB#21 Y2 David Bird's hands ACOL	Contract: 3N
Date: 07/10/2015	By: South
Dealer: East	Board #: 2
Play this hand online!	Vulnerable: N / S

	North	
	♠ A5	
	♥ AJT5	
	♦ QJT42	
	♣ 86	
West		East
♠ 973		♠ T842
♥ 974		♥ K862
♦ K3		♦ 85
♣ KQJT5		♣ 742
	South	
	♠ KQJ6	
	♥ Q3	
	♦ A976	
	♣ A93	

When you are playing in 3NT it is often quite obvious which suit you should play in your search for the extra tricks that you need.

On this deal you have a choice of two suits. Which horse will you place your bet on?

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

Lead: ♣ K

You reach 3NT after opening 1♠ and rebidding No-trumps and West leads the ♣K. You can count seven top tricks so need two more for the contract.

You decide to follow the normal procedure of **holding up an ace for two rounds**. After winning the third round of Clubs, you plan to finesse Hearts into the safe East hand. Since you will need three Heart tricks if the Heart finesse fails, you must throw a Diamond from dummy rather than a Heart on the third round of Clubs.

When you run the ♥Q, East wins with the ♥K and switches to a Diamond. You can count nine top tricks now, so it would be foolish to risk defeat by finessing in Diamonds.

You rise with the ♦A and claim the contract.



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Clone of series 1964; ACOL Version

VB#21 Y2 David Bird's hands ACOL	Contract: 6D
Date: 07/10/2015	By: South
Dealer: South	Board #: 3
Play this hand online!	Vulnerable: E / W

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

Lead: ♦ 4

North

♠ 95
♥ AK43
♦ Q875
♣ A85

West

♠ KJ742
♥ J95
♦ 64
♣ J73



East

♠ T863
♥ QT6
♦ T
♣ QT964

South

♠ AQ
♥ 872
♦ AKJ932
♣ K2

There are two chances for your contract on this deal.

You must play well to take advantage of both of them.

You open 1♦ and rebid 3♦ after a 1♥ response. This bid classically shows a good six-card suit and around 16-17 points. Somewhat stuck for a bid now North launches into Blackwood and bids a slam over your 5♥ response. West leads a trump against your small slam.

You win and draw the remaining trump. What next?

If Hearts break 3-3, you will be able to discard the ♠Q on the thirteenth Heart and avoid having to take the Spade finesse. Suppose you duck a round of Hearts, planning to play the ♥A and ♥K later to see if the suit breaks 3-3. That's no good! East may win and switch to a Spade, forcing you to guess whether to finesse the ♠Q before you know whether the Hearts are breaking evenly.

Instead you should play Ace, King and another Heart. East wins the third Heart and switches to a Spade. You now know that Hearts were 3-3. You rise with the ♠A and cross to dummy to discard the ♠Q on dummy's good Heart.



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Clone of series 1964; ACOL Version

VB#21 Y2 David Bird's hands ACOL	Contract: 4H
Date: 07/10/2015	By: South
Dealer: West	Board #: 4
Play this hand online!	Vulnerable: All

West	North	East	South
P	P	P	1♥
P	1♠	P	3♣
P	4♥	P	P
P			

Lead: ♥ 3

West leads a trump against your 4♥ contract.

You see that you have two potential losers in each of the minor suits. You expect to lose two Diamond tricks but you should be able to avoid a second club loser by ruffing a Club in the dummy.

You cannot afford to draw a second round of trumps at this point because the defenders might then be able to remove dummy's last trump when you duck a round of Clubs. Instead you play ace, king and another Club immediately. West wins and returns another trump. You win in your hand and lead your last Club, ruffing with dummy's ♥K. (This was the red king's 'purpose in life' on this particular deal.)

You will now lose only one Club trick, along with two Diamonds, and make the contract.

North

♠ A843
♥ K72
♦ T65
♣ 652

West

♠ KJT2
♥ 63
♦ J74
♣ QT73



East

♠ Q965
♥ 985
♦ KQ82
♣ J8

South

♠ 7
♥ AQJT4
♦ A93
♣ AK94

It has always annoyed me when an object has just one purpose in life and fails to achieve it. For example, a jug's purpose is to pour liquid neatly into a glass or some other receptacle. If some of the liquid spills onto the table cloth, then the jug has failed dismally.

On this deal the king of trumps has a purpose in life. Make sure that it achieves this purpose!



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Clone of series 1964; ACOL Version

VB#21 Y2 David Bird's hands ACOL	Contract: 3N
Date: 07/10/2015	By: South
Dealer: North	Board #: 5
Play this hand online!	Vulnerable: N / S

	North		
	♠ 84		
	♥ 72		
	♦ KT9652		
	♣ 652		
West		East	
♠ QJT53		♠ K962	
♥ J6		♥ QT853	
♦ Q7		♦ 84	
♣ QT97		♣ J8	
	South		
	♠ A7		
	♥ AK94		
	♦ AJ3		
	♣ AK43		

On this deal the dummy will go down with just one useful asset. Make the most of it!

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

Lead: ♠ Q

You pick up a lovely hand here - a whole 23 points. You open 2♣ and rebid 3NT and partner has ample to raise that to 3NT. The defenders, though, hit your weak spot, by leading Spades.

You win the second round of Spades and see that you will have to score several Diamond tricks to make the contract.

You lead the ♦A on the first round of Diamonds, the **high** card from the **shorter** holding. Both defenders follow low. On the second round you lead the ♦J, again leading the high card from the shorter holding. West's ♦Q appears, you are happy to see, and you win with the ♦K. Because you kept the ♦3 as the last Diamond in your hand, dummy's ♦10 will now win the third round and you can remain in dummy to score three more Diamond tricks.

You score two overtricks, West keeping his Clubs to stop you from scoring an extra trick in that suit.

What would have happened had you led the ♦A and then the ♦3? You would have **blocked** the Diamonds and gone down!



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Clone of series 1964; ACOL Version

VB#21 Y2 David Bird's hands ACOL	Contract: 4H
Date: 07/10/2015	By: South
Dealer: East	Board #: 6
Play this hand online!	Vulnerable: E / W

	North	
	♠ 952	
	♥ 8743	
	♦ 875	
	♣ J85	
West		East
♠ AKQ7		♠ T864
♥ 95		♥ 2
♦ J64		♦ T932
♣ QT73		♣ A964
	South	
	♠ J3	
	♥ AKQJT6	
	♦ AKQ	
	♣ K2	

Your partner picks up an exceptionally weak hand on this deal but it turns out to be rather more valuable than he expects.

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

Lead: ♠ A

You have another magnificent hand, another 2♣ opening bid. Partner, though, holds nothing and he does well to tell you that in the auction, dampening any thoughts you might have held about a slam.

Against 4♥ West leads out the three top Spades. What is your plan?

The red suits are both solid, so you must aim to avoid losing two Club tricks. This can be done by leading towards the ♣K, provided East holds the ♣A. However, you will need an entry to dummy to do this.

The only possible entry to dummy is in the trump suit. You must therefore ruff the third round of Spades with the ♥10, retaining the invaluable ♥6.

You draw trumps with the Ace and King. Next you might as well cash the three top Diamonds. Finally you lead your carefully preserved ♥6 to dummy's ♥7, reaching the dummy. You lead a Club towards the ♣K and luck is with you. The King wins and the contract is yours.