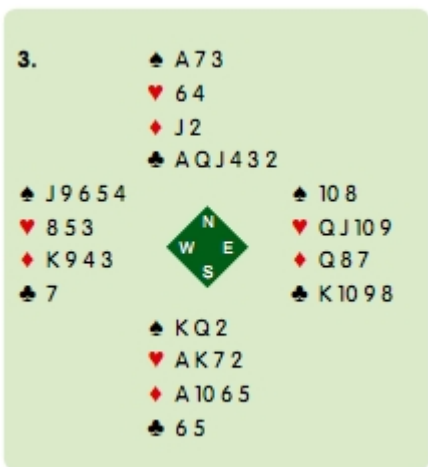


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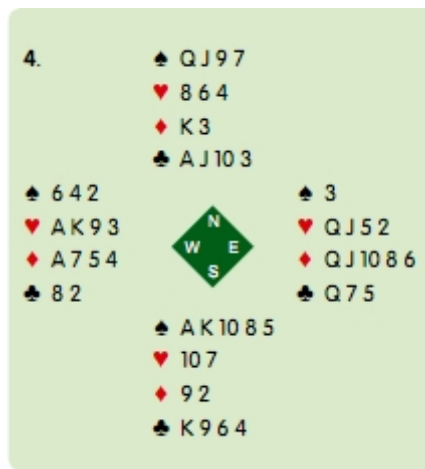
Plan your Play - March 2017 - original - [Here](#)

By David haggatt



You are declarer in 4NT and West leads the ♠5. How do you plan the play?

It is tiresome to have overreached, but nevertheless you would be unlucky not to make at least ten tricks. But you do have to be careful. Suppose you take an immediate club finesse which wins and aim to repeat it. If West now shows out, you are in deep trouble and you can only ever make two club tricks because of lack of entries to dummy. So, duck the first round of clubs completely, forcing the opposition to win. No return can harm you and you can safely play clubs from the top while you still have a spade entry in dummy. In all you make three spades, two hearts, one diamond and four clubs.



You open 1♠ fourth in hand and soon find yourself in game. West plays ♥A, ♥K and a low heart. How do you plan the play?

Most likely you are regretting opening that South hand, but it seemed a good idea at the time and to be fair the values are 'hard', you have the boss suit and partner didn't have to go leaping to game. Apart from the two hearts already lost, you have two more potential losers in diamonds and a potential club loser, but it is in understanding all that that makes the task at hand easier. You are only ever going to make ten tricks if West holds the ace of diamonds and if he holds that card he cannot possibly hold the queen of clubs because then he would have opened the bidding with his thirteen points. So draw trumps and play a low diamond to the king. If East wins, too bad, and then you are desperate not to lose a club trick, but if the king wins in dummy then you can play East for the club queen with some assurance.