

Declarer Play Quiz by David Huggett

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Dealer : Vul :	NORTH ♠ 73 ♥ A85 ♦ AQ5 ♣ K6543	
WEST ♠ A82 ♥ J1094 ♦ 8743 ♣ 97	Deal 1	EAST ♠ QJ10965 ♥ 732 ♦ K ♣ QJ10
	SOUTH ♠ K4 ♥ KQ6 ♦ J10962 ♣ A82	

You are declarer in 3NT and West leads the ♥J. How do you plan the play?

At first glance, it might seem a good idea to play on the club suit, but that line is flawed for two reasons. First, even if the suit breaks 3-2, you will still have to find another trick either from spades or diamonds but, more pertinently, if you ever lost the lead to East, he might be able to find a lethal switch to spades.

However, a quick tally of the number of tricks available outside diamonds comes to five, meaning you have to make only four diamond tricks to fulfil your contract. However, there is the danger of East gaining the lead and switching to a spade, so Eschew the diamond finesse and play the ace first This gives you the extra chance of finding East with a singleton king.

Dealer : Vul :	NORTH ♠ A753 ♥ 85 ♦ K10864 ♣ 74	
WEST ♠ KJ1 ♥ KQJ42 ♦ 52 ♣ 865	Deal 2	EAST ♠ Q1098 ♥ 1096 ♦ A ♣ Q10932
	SOUTH ♠ 64 ♥ A73 ♦ AJ973 ♣ AKJ	

You are declarer in 5♦ and West leads the ♥K. How do you plan the play?

3NT is likely to fail, so if you can make your 5♦ you are sure for a good swing. With so many trumps, it looks instinctive to play on that suit immediately, but just think what will happen if you do. Someone will win and cash a heart no doubt and, with an inescapable spade loser, the contract will flounder eventually. So, although it might lead to an eventual second undertrick, you have to be brave

Win the opening lead and play a spade to dummy in order to finesse the clubs.

If the jack wins, you aim then to cash the ace and king, throwing the heart loser from dummy.

Only then is it safe to play on trumps.