MATAMATA BRIDGE CLUB

TIPS FOR BETTER BRIDGE Defensive plays Thursday 30 March 2017

Defence is one of the hardest things to get right in bridge. Here are some tips to improve your defence. Defence is often a happy blend of counting and logical deduction in order to avoid an error and find the killing defence.

When dummy comes down – take time to: Count your known tricks Count your possible tricks Count what you know of each suit in the defensive hands Count what you know of each suit in declarer's two hands Count declarer's points as cards are played Plan a strategy to get the maximum number of tricks

Examp	ole 1	
North		
≜ Q94		
♥ A96		
♦3		
♣ KQJ872		East
		≜ 752
		♥ K8
		♦Q965
		♣ A954
Biddin	g	
S	N	
1♥	2♣	
2NT	3♥	
4♥		

Partner leads $3 \clubsuit$ against South's $4 \heartsuit$ contract. You **know** this is a singleton so you will be able to give them a ruff. The K \heartsuit is the 3^{rd} defensive trick. Where is the setting trick to come from?

Answer – If you give partner a ruff immediately, they will be unable to attack spades from their side and declarer will be able to get any losing spades away on the long clubs. Therefore you must switch to a spade now intending to give partner their ruff when in with the $K\Psi$. If partner has the $K\Phi$ they will either get it now or be able to cash it when in with their ruff.

Example 2 North ♦K965 ¥AJ4 **♦KQJ3 ♣**86 East **▲**A873 **♥**K72 **♦**108764 ♣Α Bidding Ν S 1NT 3♥ 4♥

Partner leads J \clubsuit against South's 4 \forall contract and you take the A \clubsuit . Now count your tricks – a \clubsuit , \bigstar and K \forall . Where is the setting trick to come from?

Since there is no chance of a second \bigstar trick, the 4th defensive trick will have to be a \bigstar ruff so you must engineer an entry to partners hand. There is no real hope that partner has the A \blacklozenge as South wouldn't have enough points to jump the bidding. Therefore the only hope is that you transfer your \bigstar trick to partner.

Immediately switch to a low \clubsuit , hoping that partner has Q10x of spades.

The full deal:

West ♠Q104 ♥65 ♦95 ♣J109742 South ♣J2 ♥Q10983 ♦A2 ♣KQ53

Example 3

Declarer is in 3NT and Dummy is:

≜xx ♥xxx ♦AJ109x €xxx

You have counted your known tricks and declarers known tricks at trick one, before playing to trick two. You have worked out that declarer needs 4 tricks in ♦ in order to make their 3NT contract. 2 will not be enough for them.

You hold:

- a) ♦KQx what card to you play to try to stop them getting 4 tricks in ♦
- b) ♦Qxx what card to you play to try to stop them getting 4 tricks in ♦

Answer - If declarer has 3 then there is little hope for the defence. However if declarer only has 2 then it is imperative that on

- a) You must play low. If you insert the ♦K or ♦Q then declarer will duck and finesse you for the other honour on the next round, wrapping up 4 tricks in ♦.
- b) You must play ♦Q. Declarer will duck if they need 4 tricks in the suit so you will get your ♦Q and partner will get their ♦K and declarer will get none.

Go to www.bridgebase.com to

- watch live vugraph matches and learn from the experts
- Follow lessons on card play
- Play against robots to improve your game
- Have something to do if you are bored!