

MATAMATA BRIDGE CLUB

TIPS FOR BETTER BRIDGE

Card play

Thursday 6 April 2017

Declarer play is one of the easiest things to master in bridge. However it is also very easy to miss opportunities.

When dummy comes down – take time to:

Count your known tricks

Count your possible tricks

Decide what you need to do to get the maximum number of tricks

Foresee what can go wrong, foresee any mistakes you could trick the opponents into making

Plan a strategy based on what you need

Example 1

	North		
	♠AJ52		
	♥K86		
	♦104		
	♣K1053		
West		East	
♠K1087		♠64	
♥7		♥AJ1093	
♦AJ973		♦Q852	
♣742		♣86	
	South		
	♠Q93		
	♥Q542		
	♦K6		
	♣AQJ9		

West	North	East	South
			1NT
P	2♣	P	2♥
P	2NT	P	3NT

Lead 7♦.

As declarer, what do you know?

- The opponents have 9 cards in ♦ and once they are in they will run as many as they can, at least 4
- The opponents have the A♥ and you need it to be in the East hand
- You need East to duck one round of ♥
- You need the K♠ in the West hand
- If all that happens you have 4♣, 1♦, 1♥ and 2♠ tricks ie 8 tricks. Where to get the 9th trick? The only possible place is either a third ♣ trick or a 2nd ♥ trick.
- You need the opponents to make defensive errors.

Solution

- Play low ♦ from dummy and hope an honour is played by east (1st defensive error) then take the K♦
- Lead J♣ towards dummy and put up the K♣ (making it look like you are searching for the Q♣)
- Lead 6♥ from Dummy and hope East ducks (2nd defensive error), putting up the Q♥
- Run 3 x ♣ tricks making sure you end in hand
- Lead 3♠ and finesse the J♠
- Put East in by exiting the 10♦. Now all East can do is to cash their 4 x ♦ tricks and then has to exit from K10♠

Example 2

The following hand was played by Zia Mahmood In a European Open Pairs. It is a very good example of subterfuge and deception combined with excellent reasoning and analysis.

	North		
	♠J92		
	♥J654		
	♦K9		
	♣AK106		
West		East	
♠AQ10643		♠5	
♥Q		♥A10	
♦J75		♦A432	
♣QJ4		♣987532	
	South		
	♠K87		
	♥K98732		
	♦Q1086		
	♣ -		
West	North	East	South(Zia)
1♠	P	1NT	2♥
2♠	4♥	X	P
P	P		

West led the A♠ and Zia knew East held a singleton and would get a ruff next. He smoothly played the K♠ under the A!

West should have smelt a rat. Why would declarer play the K♥ unless he had to? West should have trusted his partner to have a singleton, otherwise he would have bid 4♠ over 4♥ rather than X. What could he have to be able to X 4♥? He must have something other than the A♦ and a trump trick. He must have 3 tricks to go with his partner's one trick.

West didn't trust his partner! He decided to trust declarer instead and switched to a ♦ at trick two.

Zia tried the K♦, East won with the A♦ and returned a ♦. Zia won with the Q♦, ruffed a ♦, bringing down the J♦ and cashed AK♣ discarding his two ♠.

Zia now needed to pick up ♥ for only one loser. He led the J♥ from dummy and East played 10♥. Knowing that any normal person with Q10♥ would cover the J♥ with the Q♥, Zia rose with the K♥, felling the Q♥ and 4♥X made.

This was a hand played at our club yesterday. Hand 9. How do you play 7♣ on K♦ lead?

	North		
	♠AJ		
	♥KQ10		
	♦6		
	♣AKQ9832		
West		East	
♠102		♠K9754	
♥J532		♥97	
♦742		♦KQJ1053	
♣10754		♣ -	
	South		
	♠Q863		
	♥A864		
	♦A98		
	♣ J6		