



IBPA Column Service

Tim Bourke, Canberra

Members may use these deals as they wish, without attributing the author or IBPA.

717. Dealer South. Both Vul.

<p>♠ J 10 5 ♥ K 4 ♦ A K 6 4 3 ♣ J 9 4</p> <p>♠ 7 2 ♥ J 10 9 8 3 ♦ Q J 9 5 ♣ K 2</p> <p>♠ A K Q ♥ A 6 ♦ 10 7 2 ♣ Q 10 7 6 3</p>	<p>♠ 9 8 6 4 3 ♥ Q 7 5 2 ♦ 8 ♣ A 8 5</p>
--	--

West	North	East	South
—	—	—	INT
Pass	3NT	Pass	Pass
Pass			

West led the jack of hearts against three notrump. Declarer counted seven tricks on top and turned his attention to the matter of finding tricks eight and nine. Clearly, the answer was not in playing on clubs as then, on most layouts, the defenders would have little trouble in taking at least three hearts as well as the ace and king of clubs. So, declarer focussed on making four diamond tricks. As this would have been routine if the diamonds were 3-2, he looked to see if he could overcome some of the 4-1 breaks. Upon reflection, he saw that the only such divisions that he could make four tricks against were those where East began with a singleton eight or nine.

As the king of hearts was the only side entry to dummy, declarer took the first trick with the ace of hearts and led the ten of diamonds. When West covered this with the jack declarer took it with dummy's king of diamonds and then played the three of diamonds to his seven. West had no answer: if he took the trick, declarer would be able to finesse the six on the next round of the suit while, if he ducked, declarer would continue with ace and another diamond to set up a long diamond, with that carefully preserved king of hearts as the entry to cash it.

Of course, if West had not covered the ten of diamonds, declarer would have played low from the dummy and won the trick. Then, the ace, king and another diamond would have set up a long diamond, again with the king of hearts as the entry to cash it.

718. Dealer South. EW Vul.

<p>♠ A Q 6 ♥ 7 6 5 3 ♦ A Q 9 ♣ 8 3 2</p> <p>♠ 8 4 2 ♥ Q J 10 8 ♦ J 8 3 ♣ 6 5 4</p> <p>♠ K J 10 ♥ A 9 4 2 ♦ 7 5 2 ♣ A K Q</p>	<p>♠ 9 7 5 3 ♥ K ♦ K 10 6 4 ♣ J 10 9 7</p>
--	--

West	North	East	South
—	—	—	INT
Pass	3NT	Pass	Pass
Pass			

As North held a 3=4=3=3 shape with twelve points and a poor major suit, he bid a direct three notrump rather than use Stayman as he expected there to be a good play for that contract. West led the queen of hearts and, when East produced the king, declarer ducked, since no shift from East would be threatening. East switched to the jack of clubs, taken by declarer with the king. The suspected 4-1 heart division was confirmed when declarer cashed the ace of hearts and East discarded a diamond.

Declarer had eight tricks. Obviously, he could play on diamonds (finessing the nine first and then the queen, a 63% chance). As there was no particular hurry to start on diamonds, declarer delayed matters by cashing the ace and queen of each black suit. This brought no special information as both opponents followed suit. So, declarer cashed the kings of clubs and spades, finding both suits to be 4-3 – leaving East as having started with at most eight cards in the black suits. (If East had started with nine or ten cards in the black suits, declarer planned to finesse the queen of diamonds for his ninth trick.)

As East had at most two black-suit winners outside diamonds, declarer played a diamond toward the dummy with the intention of covering West's card. When that card was the three of diamonds, declarer played dummy's nine and East's took the trick with his ten. After cashing his two black-suit winners, East had to lead a diamond into dummy's ace-queen, surrendering the ninth trick to declarer.

Of course, if West had played the jack of diamonds on the first round of the suit, declarer would have covered it with the queen and it would have been taken by East with the king. After East had cashed his black-suit-winners, dummy would have taken the last two tricks with the ace and nine of diamonds.

Once both defenders had followed to two rounds of each black suit, declarer's subsequent overall plan would have succeeded in making a ninth trick close to nine times out of ten.

719. Dealer South. EW Vul.

	♠ Q 8 6		
	♥ Q 10 8 6		
	♦ K J 2		
	♣ 7 5 2		
♠ A K 10 9 5		♠ J 7 4 3	
♥ 2		♥ J 4	
♦ 10 9 8 4		♦ Q 7 5	
♣ K 9 6		♣ J 10 8 3	
	♠ 2		
	♥ A K 9 7 5 3		
	♦ A 6 3		
	♣ A Q 4		

West	North	East	South
—	—	—	1♥
1♠	2♥	2♠	4♥
Pass	Pass	Pass	

When this deal came up in a teams match, both tables reached four hearts by South on identical auctions. Both Wests led the king of spades and, after their partners indicated an even number of spades, they each shifted to the ten of diamonds.

The declarer at the first table was more of a card pusher than a card player and tried the jack of diamonds at trick two, which would not have been a fatal move for an expert on this particular layout.* Declarer took the queen of diamonds with the ace, then drew two rounds of trumps, ending in the dummy. Next, he led a club to his queen and West's king. (This declarer loved finesses.) As there was no way to avoid a further loser in each minor, declarer finished down one.

The declarer at the second table was in a different class: he hated finesses. This declarer played the two of diamonds from dummy and, after East followed with a low card, he played the three of diamonds from hand. West continued with a diamond but to no avail. Declarer took this with his ace, drew two rounds of trumps with the ace and dummy's queen. His next move was to ruff dummy's eight of spades. All of the preparation had been completed, and declarer crossed to dummy with the king of diamonds to lead the queen of spades and discard the four of clubs from hand on it. West took his ace of spades but found himself endplayed, forced either to lead a club or concede a ruff-and-discard: either way declarer had ten tricks.

* When East covers the jack of diamonds with the queen, declarer's objective is to keep East off play. Accordingly, he wins the queen of diamonds with the

ace, draws trumps and leads the six of diamonds. If West plays the four, declarer wins with the king and plays a third diamond, forcing West to win the trick and endplay himself. If West plays the nine or ten on the six, declarer lets him hold it. West can exit with a diamond, but this just delays the inevitable. Declarer wins with the king of diamonds, ruffs dummy's low spade, crosses back to dummy with a heart and throws a losing club on the queen of spades. West is endplayed just like the second declarer's defenders.

720. Dealer South. Both Vul.

	♠ K J 2		
	♥ K 4		
	♦ K 6 2		
	♣ K J 6 4 3		
♠ 7 5 3		♠ 9	
♥ Q J 10 9 2		♥ 8 7 6 5	
♦ 8		♦ Q J 10 4	
♣ Q 10 8 2		♣ A 9 7 5	
	♠ A Q 10 8 6 4		
	♥ A 3		
	♦ A 9 7 5 3		
	♣ —		

West	North	East	South
—	—	—	1♠
Pass	2♣	Pass	2♦
Pass	4♠	Pass	6♠
Pass	Pass	Pass	

The bidding was a little on the agricultural side but the final contract was a good one. West led the queen of hearts, taken by declarer with his ace. There were ten tricks on top and the main hope for extra tricks was in the diamond suit. If diamonds were 3-2, or trumps were 2-2 and diamonds no worse than 4-1, declarer saw that he would have twelve easy tricks.

Declarer's first move was to cash the ace and king of trumps, finding West had started with three trumps. Now all that remained was to establish the diamonds. As West held the missing trump, declarer began by cashing the ace of diamonds and leading a low diamond toward the king.

Although West had only one diamond, he was caught out by this! Eventually, he decided to ruff and play a second heart to dummy's now-bare king. Declarer cashed the king of diamonds, ruffed a club to hand and then ruffed the fourth round of diamonds with dummy's jack of trumps. The latter was his eleventh trick and the established diamond in hand was his twelfth.

If West had chosen to discard on the second diamond then dummy's king of diamonds should have won the trick. After that, declarer would have played a third round of diamonds to East. The best East could have done would have been to play a heart, after which a club ruff, a diamond ruff and a second club ruffed high would see declarer back in hand. Then, after drawing the last trump, declarer would have claimed as his hand would have contained only winners.