



IBPA Column Service

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737. Dealer South. EW Vul.

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

West	North	East	South
—	—	—	1♠
Pass	2♣	Pass	2♥
Pass	4♦	Pass	4♠
Pass	5♣	Pass	6♥
Pass	Pass	Pass	

West led the queen of diamonds and continued with a second diamond, very much against declarer's preference for a switch. Declarer saw that there would be no problem if both major suits divided favourably. If trumps were 4-0, he saw that he would need some luck in spades: either spades 3-2 or the hand with four trumps holding four spades.

What could be done if the spades were 4-1 and the hand with the singleton had three trumps? The only possible rescue plan was to try and set up dummy's clubs. So, after ruffing the diamond continuation, declarer cashed the ace of clubs then ruffed a club high. After crossing to dummy with via the nine of trumps, declarer ruffed another club high. As by now the clubs had been proved to be 4-3 and trumps no worse than 3-1, he returned to dummy with the ace of spades and ruffed a third club, thereby establishing two winners in the suit. Next, declarer led a trump to dummy's jack, then drew West's remaining trump with the king while throwing a spade from hand. The ten and nine of clubs provided parking places for his remaining low spades and he had made his contract.

Declarer was pleased to see that the actual layout would have seen six hearts fail if he had attempted to

set up his own hand: after drawing two rounds of trumps and playing on spades, West would then have ruffed in on the second round of spades.

Of course, if clubs had not broken 4-3 then declarer would have had to rely on the spade suit behaving favourably.

738. Dealer South. NS Vul.

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

West	North	East	South
—	—	—	1♥
2NT	Pass	3♣	3♥
Pass	4♥	Pass	Pass
Pass			

West's Unusual Notrump overcall turned out to be a poor choice once his opponents settled in four hearts: it drew a roadmap of how to play the contract and all the declarer had to do was read the map.

West led the king of clubs, taken by dummy's ace. Declarer counted nine top tricks with an easy tenth if the spades were 3-2. As a result, declarer concentrated on the case where spades were 4-1. In order to obtain the likely layout of the major suits, declarer cashed the ace and king of trumps. When West followed twice, declarer decided that the simplest course was to hope that West began with 1=2=5=5 distribution. Accordingly, he made the best continuation of calling for dummy's queen of spades. This was guaranteed to hold the losses in the spade suit to two tricks if West's singleton were the jack, ten or nine: it would have lost only when West had started with a singleton king or five (and in the latter case there would have been no

approach to the spade suit that would have succeeded).

The spade queen was covered by the king and ace. Once West produced the nine of spades, the contract was assured. Declarer drew the last trump then played a spade to the dummy's seven and East's ten. After winning the queen of diamonds shift with the ace, declarer played a spade to dummy's six and East's jack. Declarer conceded a diamond but claimed ten tricks: two spades, six hearts, a diamond and a club.

739. Dealer East. EW Vul.

♠ A Q J 10 2
♥ J 9
♦ Q 2
♣ J 9 6 3

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

West	North	East	South
—	—	Pass	INT
Pass	2♥	Double	2♠
Pass	4♠	Pass	Pass
Pass			

South promised three-card spade support when he volunteered two spades over the double.

West led a heart and East played three rounds of the suit, forcing dummy to over-ruff West's six of spades. Declarer could count ten tricks on a 3-2 trump break: he would be able to draw trumps, play the three club honours from hand and then cross to dummy with a heart ruff to cash the jack of clubs: that would yield five trumps, four clubs and the ace of diamonds, for a total of ten tricks.

However, when declarer cashed the ace of trumps, West gave him a problem: he discarded a diamond. As East was then marked with nine cards in the majors, declarer reasoned that a 3-3 club break was all but out of the question. Casting his mind back to the bidding, declarer recalled that East had shown up with nine high-card points and a good heart suit, but had passed as dealer. So, unless East had passed without noticing the king of diamonds, West must have that card.

As a result, declarer saw a way around his club problems. He drew all of East's trumps and discarded his ace of diamonds on the last trump! After taking his three club winners, declarer led the ten of diamonds

towards dummy's queen. West looked at this somewhat studiously but eventually rose with the king of diamonds. Dummy's jack of clubs and queen of diamonds took the last two tricks.

740. Dealer South. Both Vul.

♠ K J 9
♥ 6 5 3
♦ A Q J 9
♣ A 9 3

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

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

After a simple auction, declarer was faced with a trump lead. He saw that if he drew trumps and finessed the queen of diamonds, the contract would be in grave danger if East had started with the king of diamonds and West the ace of hearts.

Instead of exposing himself to such a risk, declarer embarked on an avoidance-type of play that might allow him to set up a diamond trick without giving East the lead. He took the first trick in dummy with the nine of trumps then played a club to his ten. West won the trick with the jack of clubs but could not attack hearts without conceding the contract. Instead, he exited with another trump.

Declarer won the trick in dummy and came to hand with the king of clubs. After crossing to dummy with the ace of diamonds, declarer discarded his remaining diamond on the ace of clubs. Although he had just swapped a diamond loser for a club loser, the benefit of this became apparent when he led the queen of diamonds for a ruffing finesse against East. If East declined to produce the king of diamonds declarer had planned to discard a heart. In practice, East played the king of diamonds. Declarer ruffed it and returned to dummy with the king of trumps to discard two hearts on dummy's two diamond winners.

Even if West had been able to win the second round of diamonds with the king, declarer would still have made the contract. The defenders could then have done no better than to take the ace of hearts as the third and final defensive trick.