

## MAKING THE EXTRA TRICK

(Seminar given by Mike Ferguson on 29 February 2024)

### FACTORS TO CONSIDER

- Make a plan
- Your target is not your contract
- Are you in the standard contract?
- Balance of risk and reward
- Strength of opponents (direct and indirect)
- Will your play(s) alert your opponents to your plan?

### HAND 1

♠AKJ53

♥87

♦K98

♣A32

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♠Q10976

♥62

♦AJ10

♣K54

Contract is 4S. They lead a heart and cash two rounds, then switch to a club. Who has the QD?

Principles of taking a two way finesse:

- Dislike of opponent
- Is someone looking very interested while their partner is almost asleep
- Always play LHO (or RHO) for the queen
- Toss a coin
- Play for the drop
- On this hand: None of the above

### Best line of play

Draw trumps, then play three rounds of clubs. Opponents must lead diamonds for you, or give you a ruff and discard.

### HAND 2

♠A2  
♥83  
♦AK765  
♣9876

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♠KQJ109  
♥A92  
♦432  
♣A5

Contract is 4S after opponents bid and supported hearts. Lead is KH.

How do you plan to play? What card do you play at trick 1? What card do you play at trick 2?

You could duck trick 1, then you cannot be stopped from ruffing a heart. Or you could win and play a second heart to ensure your ruff.

If you duck at trick 1, they switch to a club. Now what?

### Best line of play

Win trick 1, then duck a diamond. They can cash a heart but you have a trump in dummy for the third round of hearts.

You can draw trumps and cash your winning diamonds (they break 3-2). You make 11 tricks.

### HAND 3

♠AJ8  
♥A43  
♦7643  
♣965

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♠KQ10932  
♥2  
♦AK2  
♣K43

After LHO has opened one heart, you reach a contract of 4S. Lead is KH. What is your plan?

You could play RHO for the AC, but that seems very unlikely.

If you assume the AC is on your left, what can you do to avoid losing a diamond and three clubs?

You could play for the AC to be doubleton – just lead a small club twice.

Is there anything else?

#### Best line of play

Duck the first trick. Then throw a diamond on AH, cash AD and KD, cross to dummy with a trump and ruff a diamond. They break 3-3 so you can finish drawing trumps and throw a club on the 13<sup>th</sup> diamond. You lose a heart and two clubs.

## HAND 4

♠KJ87  
♥82  
♦AQ432  
♣65

\*\*\*\*\*

♠AQ1092  
♥A3  
♦765  
♣K3

After LHO opens one heart you are in four spades. The lead is the KH. RHO plays JH. How will you make 10 tricks?

Options – how do you want the opponents' cards to be placed?

### Best line of play

Duck trick 1 to prevent RHO getting in on the second round of hearts. RHO played the JH to show the 10, trying to get an entry. You need the KD to be onside, and the suit to break 3-2, but you have to let LHO win a diamond trick to set up the suit for you.

So at trick three lead a diamond towards dummy. If LHO plays the KD, duck it, otherwise play the queen (it wins). Then lead a trump to hand and lead another diamond and do the same again if RHO plays KD. If not, then play AD.

Now draw trumps and concede the KD. You still have an entry in trumps to reach the long diamonds.

The timing of drawing trumps is the key to the hand. LHO has one trump and RHO has three. If a second round of trumps is played, LHO will discard KD!!!

## HAND 5

Sometimes you don't need any knowledge or skill to make the extra trick, just take the tricks you have in the right order.

♠A10432

♥AK2

♦A95

♣K76

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♠KQJ

♥543

♦J76

AQJ10

You are in 6NT. The lead is KD. You win and cash winners, spades (discarding a heart and a diamond) then clubs. After nine tricks the position is:

♥AK2

♦7

\*\*\*\*\*

♥54

♦J

♣10

Now cash your last club discarding a diamond from dummy. Has anyone thrown QD? No? Then cash three heart tricks. Well played for the overtrick!!

### Best line of play

Cash winners. Sometimes one player has all the key cards and can't hold on to everything. Here LHO had five hearts as well as QD, and something had to go. All you have to do is pay attention to the discards and watch out for QD