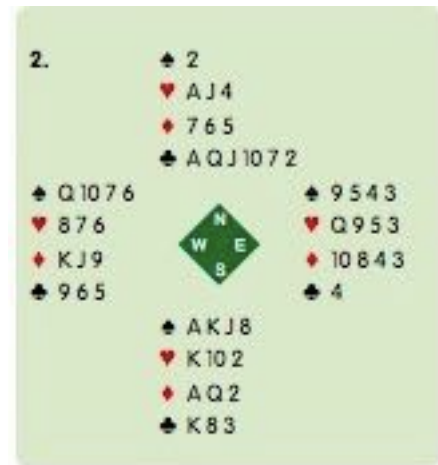


You are declarer in 3NT and West leads the ♥7. How do you plan the play?

With eight tricks easily available, it might be tempting to try and make a spade trick for the ninth. But see what happens if you lead a spade from dummy at trick two. An alert East will rise with the ace and return a heart. With the queen of hearts wrong, you need to make three club tricks for your contract without losing one.

In fact the contract is solid. All you have to do is safety play the clubs at trick two for three tricks. Play the king and then low towards dummy, aiming to play the nine if West follows low. And if West shows out you win with dummy's ace and lead back towards the knave



You are declarer in 6NT and West leads the ♣6. How do you plan the play?

It's annoying but clever of West to find the one lead that doesn't help your cause at all and perhaps you should just run the long suit and try to catch inferences from the opponents' discards – although you would have to ruin your own hand somewhat in the process. Actually the hand is 100% guaranteed after you exhaust the opponents of clubs. Simply play a spade to the eight. West may win cheaply but he will be endplayed in three suits to give you your twelfth trick. Should East play the nine or the ten on the spade lead then you simply play the jack with the same effect.