

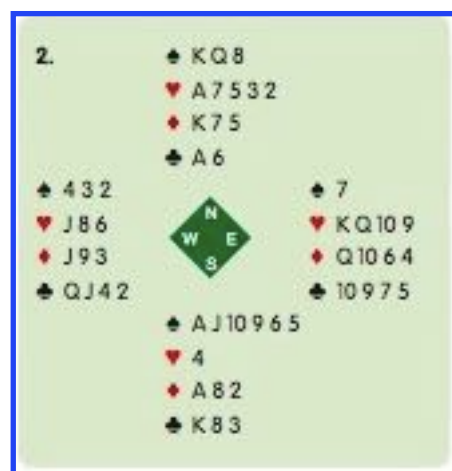
You are declarer in 4♠ after East opens 1♥. West leads the ♥2 and East plays the ♥Q. How do you plan the play?

This looks to be a pretty sound contract and, as always when that is the case, you have to look for hidden dangers.

Here the only danger is that you might sustain a diamond ruff if that suit breaks particularly badly and so it might seem that you have to draw trumps as soon as possible. But suppose you do that by leading a trump at trick two. East will

win, cash his putative singleton ace of diamonds and lead a heart to his partner's known jack – known because of the ♥ opening lead – and then get his ruff. You ♦ can combat this defence in either of two ♣ ways.

Either duck the initial lead or return a heart at trick two, severing communications in both instances



You are declarer in 7♠ and West leads the ♠2 with East following. How do you plan the play?

It is always ambitious bidding a grand slam and the odds have to be well in your favour. Here the main problem perhaps lies in determining which thirteen tricks are there to be made. However on a good day the hearts will break no worse than 4-3 and you can always manage a club ruff in dummy. Six spades, two hearts, two diamonds, two clubs and a ruff comes to thirteen but you have to go about setting up these tricks carefully.

Play ace of hearts and ruff a heart followed by a club to the ace and ruff another heart. Finally king of clubs and a club ruff allows you to ruff yet another heart setting up a winner in dummy. Draw the remaining two trumps and cross to dummy's king of diamonds to cash that last little heart.

