

DROP IT OR FINESSE?

As declarer in 3NT, how would you play each suit holding for the most tricks?

1. North or South on lead

A765



QJ32

- Cash the Ace?
- Lead low to the Queen
- Lead the Queen?

2. South on lead

AQ765



J432

- Cash the Ace?
- Lead low to the Queen
- Lead the jack

3. South on lead

AQ765



J9832

- Cash the Ace?
Ten? B. Lead low to the Queen?
lead the Queen?
- Lead the Jack?

4. South on lead

AJT8



Q432

- Lead low to Jack, then later low to the
b. Lead low to the Jack, later
- Lead the Queen?

5. South on lead

AT



KJ543

- Cash the Ace and King?
- Win the Ace then run the Ten?
- Lead low to the Ten?

6. South on lead

A32



KJT54


- Cash the Ace and King
- Win the Ace then finesse the Jack?
- Lead the Jack?

ANSWERS: 1=A, 2=B, 3=C, 4=B, 5=C, 6=B


WHEN TO COVER AN HONOUR – SOME TESTS

What do you play as East?


1

<u>J</u> 43
 K72


2

<u>Q</u> J2
 K65


3

<u>T</u> 6
 Q975


4

<u>J</u> T8
 AQ4


5

<u>9</u> 2
 J73


6

<u>T</u> 92
 Q84


7

<u>T</u> 82
 K74


8

<u>9</u> 83
 KT4

9

<u>J</u> T3
 K98

10

<u>A</u> T97
 J4

Answers:

1. K
2. 5
3. Q
4. A
5. J
6. 4
7. K
8. K
9. 8
10. 4

TEST YOUR DEFENCE

(Signals - High Encourage, Natural Count)

1.

Nil Vul

♠ Q7
♥ A108
♦ KJ5
♣ AK964

<u>West</u>	<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>South</u>
2S	X	P	3H
All pass			

♠ AK10962

♥ 43

♦ 862

♣ 103



Contract: **3H South**

You are West. After opening a classic weak two-bid to apparently no avail, you find yourself on lead against a heart partscore. You lead the obvious KS, partner plays the 8, and South the 4.

- a. How many spades did partner probably start with?
 - b. Who has the JS?
 - c. Which card do you lead now?
-

2.

Nil Vul

AQ10
J4
AQJ6
AQJ6

<u>West</u>	<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>South</u>
2H	X	P	2S
P	3S	P	4S
All pass			

72

AKQ873

732

94



Contract: **4S South**

You are West. You lead the KH, partner plays the 2, and South the 5; then the AH, partner plays the 9, and South the 10.

- a. Who has the 6H?
 - b. Is there any clue which suit partner wants led?
 - c. Which card do you lead?
-

Answers

1a. 2 1b. South 1c. 2D
2a. East 2b. Yes 3c. 2D

TRICKS OF THE TRADE

1.

♠ Q963
♥ 853
♦ A6
♣ A852

Lead 4H



♠ J104
♥ AK6
♦ KQ2
♣ KJ65

3NT South

S	W	N	E
1NT	P	2C	P
2D	P	3NT	All pass

2.

♠ QJ543
♥ A1096
♦ A2
♣ 64

Lead 5C



♠ A10
♥ QJ8
♦ KQJ107
♣ AK8

6NT South

S	W	N	E
2NT	P	3C*	X*
3S	P	3NT	P
4NT*	P	5H	P
6NT	All pass		

*3C = Stayman
*4NT/4C = Ace ask
*X = asks for club lead
(double of an artificial bid
e.g. 3C will show a good suit in Clubs)

Ask these questions about both the above hands.

1. How many top tricks do you have in all 4 suits?
2. How many additional tricks do you need to make your contract?
3. What suit(s) may yield an extra trick by an honour?
4. What suit(s) may yield an extra suit by length?
5. Does the lead look like 4th highest? Short suit? Honour sequence?
6. Do you plan to use the holdup play on the first trick?
7. Is one specific opponent more dangerous than the other? If so, who?
8. In which suit do you plan to establish your first additional trick?

Answers Hand 1. 1=7, 2=2, 3=Spades/Clubs, 4=C, 5=Fourth, 6=Yes, 7=West, 8=Spades
Answers Hand 2. 1=9, 2=3, 3=Spades/Hearts, 4=S, 5=Short suit, 6=No, 7=No, 8=Spades

KEY PLAYS AT NO TRUMPS

1.

Both Vul ♠ A93
 ♥ Q3
 ♦ 10432
 ♣ A753

Lead 10H



♠ K764
♥ AK2
♦ QJ

3NT South ♣ K642

- a. How many top tricks?
- b. Which two suits do you plan to establish?
1,2,3
- c. What is the key play?
 - A. Duck a club first
 - B. Duck a spade first
 - C. Lead a diamond first

2.

Nil Vul ♠ Q82
 ♥ 107
 ♦ A8763
 ♣ K54

Lead 4H



♠ AK3
♥ A65
♦ K2

3NT South ♣ Q10983

- a. How many top tricks?
- b. On which round do you win the AH?
- c. What is the key play?
 - A. Lead the 10C and let it ride
 - B. Lead the 3C to the king and then finesse the 10C
 - C. Win the KD and duck a diamond

3.

Both Vul ♠ 763
 ♥ K95
 ♦ J95
 ♣ AK98

Lead 3H



♠ K5
♥ A82
♦ AKQ2

3NT South ♣ 6542

- a. How many top tricks?
- b. Which defender is more dangerous?
- c. What is the key play?
 - A. Lead the 2C and finesse the 8
 - B. Try to duck a club to West
 - C. Lead a spade to your king

4.

E/W Vul ♠ KQJ2
 ♥ 74
 ♦ 8762
 ♣ AK2

Lead JH



♠ A6
♥ AK62
♦ AK3

6NT South ♣ Q973

- a. How many top tricks?
- b. Do you win the first trick or duck? -W,D
- c. What is the key play?
 - A. Lead the 3D
 - B. Cash the A-KD; if both defenders follow up-the-line, lead 3D
 - C. Run the spades and clubs

ANSWERS: Case 1 a=7, b=C and D, c=C Case 2 a=6, b=3, c=A Case 3 a=8, b=E can lead a spade, c=B Case 4 a=11, b=W,c=A

DROP IT OR FINESSE – MORE

As declarer in 3NT, how would you play each suit holding for the most tricks?

1. South leads

AK32
†
J954

What is your play?

- Win the ace and king
- Lead the jack
- Win the ace; later lead the jack

2. North or South leads

AT32
†
KJ654

What is your play?

- Win the ace and king
- Win the ace then finesse the jack
- Win the king then finesse the 10

3. South leads

A9
†
KQT5

What is your play?

- Win the ace, king and queen
- Win the ace then finesse the 10
- Lead low to the nine

4. North or South leads

K32
†
AQT5

What is your play?

- Win the ace, king and queen
- Win the ace, king and finesse the 10
- Lead the 10

5. South leads

A2
†
KQT54

What is your play?

- Win the ace, king and queen
- Win the ace then finesse the 10
- Lead the 10

6. South leads

AT
†
KQ543

What is your play?

- Win the ace, king and queen
- Win the ace then run the 10
- Lead low to the 10

WHEN TO COVER AN HONOUR

Do you know when to cover an honour? If you learn the rules stated here, you will be a strong defender, and no one will steal tricks from you. Rules apply in general to all contracts, notrump or suit.

Holding one honour....

If the honour lead is accompanied by a touching card, do not cover.

	<u>J</u> T3	
K92	+	Q84
	A765	

Assume the Jack is lead. Since the Jack is supported by the 10, East should not cover the first time and play low. They should cover on the lead of the 10.

Cover an unsupported honour.

	<u>J</u> 52	
KT9	+	Q84
	A763	

Again, assume the Jack is lead. East should cover this time because the Jack is unsupported.

Nines and tens are important. Nines and tens are important cards in many situations and should be treated as honours for the purpose of this study.

Holding two honours...

If you have two honours above the honour lead, always cover with your higher one

	<u>T</u> 96	
A82	+	KJ3
	Q754	

Assume the 10 is lead. East should cover with the king, winning the trick. If North later leads the nine, East covers with the Jack and the defenders get 3 tricks. Any other play by East you lose a trick.

Exceptions - if the bidding indicates that partner has a singleton or void in the suit led by declarer (such as trumps), do not cover unless it will benefit your hand.