

Notes for Week No. 1

Promotion

As declarer, you can develop extra winners in a suit by **promotion**, driving out the opponents' higher honours so that your honours can take tricks. Tricks can also be developed by playing a long suit so that your small cards are good when the opponents run out of the suit.

| | | | | | | |
|--------------|------------|------------|-------|------|-------|---|
| | ♠ K 8 2 | | South | West | North | E |
| | ♥ K Q 10 3 | | 1♦ | P | 1♥ | P |
| | ♦ 10 5 2 | | 1NT | P | P | P |
| | ♣ 6 4 2 | | | | | |
| ♠ Q J 10 7 3 | | ♠ 9 4 | | | | |
| ♥ 9 8 5 2 | | ♥ A 7 6 | | | | |
| ♦ K 3 | | ♦ Q J 9 8 | | | | |
| ♣ Q 7 | | ♣ K J 10 5 | | | | |
| | ♠ A 6 5 | | | | | |
| | ♥ J 4 | | | | | |
| | ♦ A 7 6 4 | | | | | |
| | ♣ A 9 8 3 | | | | | |

Lead: Q♣

Declarer wins A♠ and leads J♥, driving out the A. Declarer's remaining heart honours are now good. This an example of promotion.

Sluffing Losers

In a suit contract it is customary for declarer to count losers and formulate a plan before proceeding. Sometimes it is possible to sluff a loser on a high card in another suit. See the sample hand below.

| | | | | | | |
|---------------|----------------|--------------|------|-------|------|-------|
| | ♠ 7 4 3 | | West | North | East | South |
| | ♥ 8 4 3 | | | 1♦ | P | 1♠ |
| | ♦ A K Q 4 | | P | 1NT | P | 4♠ |
| | ♣ A 6 4 | | P | P | P | |
| ♠ A | | ♠ 9 8 5 | | | | |
| ♥ K Q J 9 | | ♥ 7 6 2 | | | | |
| ♦ J 8 7 6 5 2 | | ♦ 10 9 | | | | |
| ♣ Q 9 | | ♣ K J 10 5 2 | | | | |
| | ♠ K Q J 10 6 2 | | | | | |
| | ♥ A 10 5 | | | | | |
| | ♦ 3 | | | | | |
| | ♣ 8 7 2 | | | | | |

Lead K♥

You have five losers, one spade, two clubs and two hearts. When you lose a spade to the ace, the opponents will cash two heart tricks. However, when you regain the lead, you can draw trump, cash the diamonds and sluff your two club losers.

Notes for Week No. 2

To Draw Trump or Not Draw Trump

One of the most important maxims in bridge is that a declarer in a suit contract should draw trump at the first opportunity. Occasionally this maxim should be disregarded but declarer must have a good reason for doing so. Look at the following example.

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---------|---|-----------|---|----------|------|-------|------|
| | | ♠ | K J 10 9 | | South | West | North | East |
| | | ♥ | A 2 | | 1NT | P | 2♣ | P |
| | | ♦ | 7 6 5 | | 2♠ | P | 4♠ | P |
| | | ♣ | Q 10 8 4 | | P | P | | |
| ♠ | 2 | | | ♠ | A 4 3 | | | |
| ♥ | J 7 6 3 | | | ♥ | 10 9 8 5 | | | |
| ♦ | K Q J 9 | | | ♦ | 10 8 3 | | | |
| ♣ | 9 6 5 2 | | | ♣ | K J 7 | | | |
| | | ♠ | Q 8 7 6 5 | | | | | |
| | | ♥ | K Q 4 | | | | | |
| | | ♦ | A 4 2 | | | | | |
| | | ♣ | A 3 | | | | | |

Lead K♦

You have a club loser, two diamond losers and a spade loser. If you lead trump at trick two, the opponents can win A♠ and cash two diamond winners. You will eventually lose A♣. You must delay playing trumps and play three rounds of hearts, sluffing a diamond loser while you still have the chance. Now it is safe to draw trump

Notes for Weeks No. 3 and 4

Ruffing Losers in the Dummy

One of the pleasures of playing suit contracts is having the opportunity to eliminate losers by ruffing. In the hand shown below, you have the opportunity to ruff both clubs and hearts in your hand. However there is no point in doing this. It doesn't increase the number of trump tricks. You will still make only six spade tricks. However, if you ruff a diamond in the dummy, you will still win six trump tricks in your hand for a total of seven trump tricks.

| | | | | | | | |
|---|----------|-------------|---|-----------|------|-------|------|
| | ♠ | K 8 5 | | South | West | North | East |
| | ♥ | K 8 6 3 | | 1♠ | P | 2♣ | P |
| | ♦ | 10 2 | | 2♠ | P | 4♠ | P |
| | ♣ | A Q 8 2 | | P | P | | |
| ♠ | J 9 2 | | ♠ | 10 | | | |
| ♥ | Q 10 5 4 | | ♥ | J 9 7 | | | |
| ♦ | A Q 9 | | ♦ | J 8 7 6 5 | | | |
| ♣ | 10 6 5 | | ♣ | K J 9 7 | | | |
| | ♠ | A Q 7 6 4 3 | | | | | |
| | ♥ | A 2 | | | | | |
| | ♦ | K 4 3 | | | | | |
| | ♣ | 4 3 | | | | | |

Lead 4♥

To Draw Trump or Not Draw Trump

You should start by drawing trumps unless there is a reason to delay. In this case, if you draw trumps first, dummy will not have any trumps remaining to ruff a diamond. You must begin by winning K♥ and leading a diamond toward the K. On winning the A♦, west should lead a trump to thwart your plan. However, time is on your side. Give up another diamond and you still have a trump in dummy to ruff your last diamond.

If you take even one round of trump, west will have the tempo to remove dummy's trumps before the diamonds are exhausted. Indeed, if the opening lead had been a trump, the contract could not have been made.

In situations where you have plenty of trumps, do not ignore the maxim about drawing trumps without delay. Suppose you are playing the hand shown below.

| | | | | | | |
|----------------|--------------|--------------|-------|------|-------|------|
| | ♠ Q 9 8 3 | | South | West | North | East |
| | ♥ 7 6 3 | | | | 1♣ | P |
| | ♦ K 3 | | 1♠ | P | 2♠ | P |
| | ♣ A K 6 2 | | 4♠ | P | P | P |
| ♠ 6 4 | | ♠ J 2 | | | | |
| ♥ K Q 10 4 | | ♥ A 9 8 | | | | |
| ♦ Q J 10 8 5 4 | | ♦ 7 6 | | | | |
| ♣ J 9 | | ♣ Q 10 7 5 3 | | | | |
| | ♠ A K 10 7 5 | | | | | |
| | ♥ J 6 4 | | | | | |
| | ♦ A 9 2 | | | | | |
| | ♣ 8 4 | | | | | |

Lead K♥

The opponents start with three heart tricks. On gaining the lead, declarer should draw trumps immediately. There will still be a trump remaining in dummy to ruff the diamond loser. Can you see what will happen if declarer tries to ruff the diamond loser before drawing trump? This may be an unlikely occurrence, but a 100% chance of success is better than a 95% chance.