

## Theme of the Week: Defense

This week we will take a look at two defensive problems and the thought-process required each time to prevent declarer from making their contract.

### Board : 1

Dealer : N ♠ 3 2  
 Vuln : None ♥ 5 4  
 ♦ K Q J 10 9  
 ♣ 7 6 5 3

♠ Q 9 8 7 5				♠ J 10
♥ J 10 8 7				♥ Q 9 2
♦ A 6 4	W	1	E	♦ 8 7 2
♣ 10				♣ Q J 9 4 2
		S		
		♠ A K 6 4		
		♥ A K 6 3		
		♦ 5 3		
		♣ A K 8		

**Bidding:** North is the dealer for the first hand. North should pass because they have less than 12 points and no 6 card suit to bid at the 2 level. The same reasoning applies for East to pass.

South should open 2NT which shows 20-21 points and a balanced hand and no singletons (suits with just one card in it). West does not have anything of value to bid so they pass as well. North can count 20-21 from South and the 6 in their hand for 26-27 points between the partnership. North does not have a 4 or 5 card major (hearts or spades), and this is enough points for game so North bids 3NT.

**Declarer:** Say that West leads the 7 of spades (4th from longest and strongest). South should count their tricks before playing the first card from dummy. South can see the A and K of spades, A and K of hearts, and the A and K of clubs for 6 total tricks. As South is in 3NT, they need 3 more tricks for a total of 9 tricks.

The suit that offers declarer the most potential for more tricks is diamonds. Declarer should win the spade with the A and immediately lead a diamond to try to set the suit up.

**Defense:** When declarer leads at trick two, the person who has the A♦ should be careful not to win the trick immediately. If the defense wins the diamond at Trick 2, the declarer can win whatever the defense plays at Trick 3. Then declarer can use their last diamond to go do the remaining high diamonds in dummy taking 2 spades, 2 hearts, 4 diamonds, and 2 clubs for 10 total tricks.

Instead the defense can let declarer win the diamond at Trick 3. If declarer then leads another diamond on Trick 4, the defense should then win this diamond. Now, declarer is stuck. All the diamonds are high in dummy, but declarer has no way to get to them.

**Patience on defense** will lead to declarer only being able to take 2 spades, 2 hearts, 1 diamond and 2 clubs for 7 total tricks (down 2)!

West	North	East	South
			1♠
Pass	2♠	Pass	4♠
All Pass			

Dlr: South ♠ Q 8 2

Vul: Both ♥ K 4

♦ 8 7 5 3

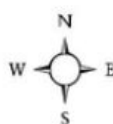
♣ J 6 4 2

♠ 6 4

♥ J 10 9 6

♦ 9 4 2

♣ K 9 7 5



♠ A 7 5

♥ A Q 8 7

♦ 10 6

♣ Q 10 8 3

♠ K J 10 9 3

♥ 5 3 2

♦ A K Q J

♣ A

**Bidding:** South is the dealer and has 12 or more points and 5 or more spades, therefore opens 1♠. North has 6 or more points and 3 or more spades and responds with 2♠.

South has 18 points plus 1 extra point for having a 5 card suit and another 1 extra point for having a side four card suit (diamonds). This brings us to 20 total points based on high cards and length.

South can add their 20 points to partner's 6 points and see that they have enough points for game. Therefore South's next bid is 4S.

**Lead:** J♥ (we want to lead from the top of sequences).

**Declarer:** Let's count our tricks! We have 4 spades (once the A♠ is gone), 4 diamonds, and 1 club for 9 tricks. We need a 10th trick from somewhere! The easiest place to look for a 10th trick is the heart suit. We want to ruff our 3rd little heart with one of dummy's spades.

Declarer is hoping that the defense continues to play hearts. Declarer has the option of playing the K or small at trick one from dummy. In this case it does not matter since East has the A. There is a small chance that West lead from AJ109 of hearts so I might play the K.

**Defense:** The defense must realize what declarer's plan is. They see short hearts (only 2) in dummy and must realize that if they take the first two heart tricks, declarer will be able to win whatever they play and then ruff the 3rd heart in dummy.

Therefore whoever wins trick 1 on defense has to immediately switch to spades at trick 2. The defense can duck this spade or win the Ace and play another. Either will work as long as they lead spades again when a second heart is played by declarer. Now dummy will have no more trumps and declarer can't get rid of the 3rd small heart in their hand.

Here the defense must **prevent a ruff** by **drawing dummy's trump**. If the defense is able to do this, declarer will be stuck with the original 9 tricks that they had and go down 1 from losing 3 spades and 1 heart.