

BRIDGE PRACTICE PLAY

PLANNING IN NOTRUMP

Deal 1 – Dealer East

West leads the ♠5.

♠	A
♥	AJ52
♦	J542
♣	Q1062

	N	
W		E
	S	

♠	K43
♥	K10
♦	KQ108
♣	J953

West	North	East	South
		1♠	pass
pass	dbl	pass	2NT
pass	3NT	all pass	

How would you play 3NT when West leads the ♠5?

Deal 2 – Dealer North

West leads the ♠J.

♠	A3
♥	72
♦	AK8752
♣	842

	N	
W		E
	S	

♠	K82
♥	KQ8
♦	Q3
♣	AKQJ10

West	North	East	South
	1♦	pass	2♣
pass	2♦	pass	4NT
pass	5♦	pass	6NT
all pass			

West leads the ♠J against 6NT. What is your plan? (Don't fall off your chair if the diamonds fail to break!)

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Deal 3 – Dealer North

♠ A 9 8 7 5 2
♥ 9
♦ A J 6
♣ Q 7 5

West leads the ♥8.

	N	
W		E
	S	

♠ J 10 3
♥ A Q 6
♦ K Q 9 7
♣ A K 10

West	North	East	South
	1♠	3♥	4NT
pass	5♥	pass	6NT
all pass			

West leads the ♥8, covered by the ♥9 and ♥10. You win with the ♥Q and run the ♠J to East's ♠K. How will you continue when East clears the hearts, West playing the ♥2 on the second round?

Deal 4 – Dealer South

♠ 8 5
♥ 8 5 3
♦ J 10 8 3
♣ A Q 10 4

West leads the ♠4.

	N	
W		E
	S	

♠ K J 3
♥ A K Q
♦ A Q 9 2
♣ J 9 6

West	North	East	South
			2NT
pass	3NT	all pass	

West leads the ♠4 against 3NT and East plays the ♠Q. What is your plan?

Excerpt taken from:

TEST YOUR BRIDGE TECHNIQUE:

Planning in Notrump

MASTER POINT PRESS



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BRIDGE PRACTICE PLAY

PLANNING IN NOTRUMP — SOLUTIONS

Deal 1 - Dealer East

♠ 852	♠ A	♠ QJ10976									
♥ 9763	♥ AJ52	♥ Q84									
♦ A963	♦ J542	♦ 7									
♣ 87	♦ Q1062	♣ AK4									
	<table border="1" style="margin: auto; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr><td></td><td style="text-align: center;">N</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">W</td><td></td><td style="text-align: center;">E</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td style="text-align: center;">S</td><td></td></tr> </table>		N		W		E		S		
	N										
W		E									
	S										
	♠ K43										
	♥ K10										
	♦ KQ108										
	♣ J953										

West	North	East	South
		1♠	pass
pass	dbl	pass	2NT
pass	3NT	all pass	

You have only four top tricks and one remaining spade stopper. You will not have enough time to establish the clubs, so you must score three diamond tricks and four heart tricks to go with the two top spades. Four heart tricks can be scored only when East started with the queen and two or fewer small cards in the suit. Because entries to the dummy are sparse, you must lead a heart at Trick 2, finessing the ♥10. The finesse wins

and you cash the king of hearts. Now you need to return to the dummy to continue playing hearts. You lead the ♦K from your hand. Let's say that West holds up the ace not only on the first round but also when you continue with the ♦Q. You now lead a third round of diamonds. If West plays low again, win with dummy's ♦J and play the ace of hearts, dropping East's queen.

The ♥J will be your eighth trick. It may seem that you are cut off from the king of spades but when you play a club the defenders can score only two clubs and one diamond before they will have to play a spade. You end up with nine tricks and the game is made.

Deal 2 - Dealer North

♠ J1097	♠ A3	♠ Q654									
♥ 10543	♥ 72	♥ AJ96									
♦ J1064	♦ AK8752	♦ 9									
♣ 3	♣ 842	♣ 9765									
	<table border="1" style="margin: auto; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr><td></td><td style="text-align: center;">N</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">W</td><td></td><td style="text-align: center;">E</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td style="text-align: center;">S</td><td></td></tr> </table>		N		W		E		S		
	N										
W		E									
	S										
	♠ K82										
	♥ KQ8										
	♦ Q3										
	♣ AKQJ10										

West	North	East	South
	1♦	pass	2♣
pass	2♦	pass	4NT
pass	5♦	pass	6NT
all pass			

The heart suit may rescue you, since you can score two heart tricks if East holds the ♥A. Suppose you win the spade lead in your hand and continue with the queen and ace of diamonds, East showing out on the second round. It will be too late to turn to hearts! You can play a heart to the king, yes, but the only re-entry to dummy is the ♠A. If you use that to play a sec-

ond heart, your protection in spades will be gone.

To combine your chances in the two red suits, you must win the opening lead with dummy's ace and play a heart immediately. The king wins and you continue with the queen, king and ace of diamonds, finding the bad break there. Now you are in the right hand to lead a second round of hearts to towards your hand. If East rises, he has no diamond to play.

(If East has the ♥A and four diamonds the contract can be made only by double-dummy play.)

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PLANNING IN NOTRUMP — SOLUTIONS

Deal 3 - Dealer North

♠ 64	<table style="margin: auto;"> <tr><td></td><td>N</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>W</td><td></td><td>E</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td>S</td><td></td></tr> </table>		N		W		E		S		♠ KQ
		N									
W			E								
		S									
♥ 82		♥ KJ107543									
♦ 1043	♦ 852										
♣ J98632	♣ 4										
	♠ J103										
	♥ AQ6										
	♦ KQ97										
	♣ AK10										

West	North	East	South
	1♠	3♥	4NT
pass	5♥	pass	6NT
all pass			

You win the heart lead with the queen and run the jack of spades to East's king. East clears the hearts and all now depends on you reading the lie of the spades. If West started with ♠Q-x-x in the suit, you will have to finesse on the second round. If instead East started with ♠K-Q doubleton, you must play for the drop. Which is it to be?

As on many such deals, you should delay the critical guess until the last moment. You must try to get a complete count on the hand (in other words, to determine the shape of the defenders' hands). When you play four rounds of diamonds and two rounds of clubs, you discover that East is 3-1 in those suits. From East's 3♥ bid and West's lead of the eight of hearts followed by the two, it is reasonable to assume that East holds seven hearts. So, his shape is 2-7-3-1. You lead the ♠10 and (after a cruel few seconds of thought, to raise the defenders' hopes!) you play dummy's ace of spades. East's spade queen falls and the slam is yours.

Deal 4 - Dealer South

♠ A10742	<table style="margin: auto;"> <tr><td></td><td>N</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>W</td><td></td><td>E</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td>S</td><td></td></tr> </table>		N		W		E		S		♠ Q96
		N									
W			E								
		S									
♥ 1042		♥ J976									
♦ 75	♦ K64										
♣ 872	♣ K53										
	♠ KJ3										
	♥ AKQ										
	♦ AQ92										
	♣ J96										

West	North	East	South
			2NT
pass	3NT	all pass	

If spades were 6-2 it is sometimes right to hold up the spade king, breaking the communication between the defenders. However, it is clear from West's fourth-best lead of the ♠4 that he can hold no more than five spades. (The ♠4 is his fourth-best card in the suit and only one lower spot card is out.) The best idea is to win the first spade with the king. Your remaining ♠J-3 will act as a stopper in the suit provided East does not gain the lead. What next?

Suppose you take an immediate club finesse. This will be 'into the danger hand'. If the finesse loses, East will return a spade and you will go down. A better idea is to cross to the ♣A and to run the ♦J. A diamond finesse will be 'into the safe hand'. You will go down only if two cards are both badly placed — the ♦K and the ♣K. Here the diamond finesse will win and you will have nine tricks. If instead the diamond finesse had lost, you would still succeed when West also held the ♣K. If he played a second round of spades when he was in with the ♦K, the ♠J would be your ninth trick. If, instead, he exited passively in one of the red suits, you would be able to take the club finesse.

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