

Improvers' Lesson 8: Defensive 2nd & 3rd Hand Play

Board 1
North Deals
None Vul

♠ J 10 2
♥ A 9 6 3
♦ K Q 5 4
♣ J 7

♠ K 6 3
♥ 10 5 4 2
♦ 8 7
♣ Q 10 8 4

♠ Q 9 4
♥ Q J 8
♦ J 10 6 3
♣ A 9 3

♠ A 8 7 5
♥ K 7
♦ A 9 2
♣ K 6 5 2

| | | | |
|----------|-------|------|-------|
| West | North | East | South |
| Pass | Pass | Pass | 1 NT |
| All pass | 2 NT | Pass | 3 NT |

Lead: ♣ 4

The small card lead promises an honour. When in dummy, declarer leads the ♠ J, East MUST NOT cover. Best practice is to cover the second card of the sequence. Now the defence will win 2 spade tricks.. If the ♠ J is covered declarer will play towards the ♠ 10 and EW will win only 1 spade trick.

Correct defence defeats the contract

Board 2
East Deals
N-S Vul

♠ K 7 4
♥ J 10 4 3
♦ J 10 2
♣ K 3 2

♠ Q 10 8 2
♥ K 6
♦ A 4 3
♣ J 8 7 4

♠ A J 5
♥ 9 8 7 2
♦ 9 5
♣ A 10 6 5

♠ 9 6 3
♥ A Q 5
♦ K Q 8 7 6
♣ Q 9

| | | | |
|----------|-------|------|-------|
| West | North | East | South |
| All pass | | Pass | 1 NT |

Lead: ♠ 2

If declarer plays low, East must play the ♠ J (a surrounding card). Now a diamond switch up to the weakness in dummy.

West continues with the ♠ Q and declarer loses 4 spades. West exits with a low club and East plays the ♣ 10 if dummy plays low.

Board 3
South Deals
E-W Vul

♠ J 10 4 3
♥ K 2
♦ A Q 8
♣ 6 5 4 2

♠ Q 7
♥ A 4
♦ J 10 9 7 5 3
♣ 10 9 8

♠ K 9 2
♥ 10 6 5 3
♦ K 6 2
♣ Q J 7

♠ A 8 6 5
♥ Q J 9 8 7
♦ 4
♣ A K 3

| | | | |
|----------|-------|------|-------|
| West | North | East | South |
| Pass | 1 ♠ | Pass | 2 ♠ |
| Pass | 3 ♠ | Pass | 4 ♠ |
| All pass | | | |

Lead ♣ Q

Declarer will come to their hand with the ♥ K or ♦ A and if they play the ♠ J, East must NOT cover as North will have the ♠ 10 and it is better to cover the second card in a sequence.

Now the defence will win two trump tricks as well as a club and the ♥ A.

Board 4
West Deals
Both Vul

♠ K 8 7 2
♥ 5
♦ A 8 5 2
♣ 9 6 4 2

♠ A 4 3
♥ A K 9 7 6 2
♦ K Q 3
♣ 3

♠ 9 6 5
♥ J 10 3
♦ J 10 7 6
♣ A Q 7

♠ Q J 10
♥ Q 8 4
♦ 9 4
♣ K J 10 8 5

| | | | |
|------|-------|------|----------|
| West | North | East | South |
| 1 ♥ | Pass | 1 NT | Pass |
| 3 ♥ | Pass | 4 ♥ | All pass |

Lead: ♠ 2

South must play the ♠ 10 (lowest of touching cards when following suit). If declarer later leads the ♥ J, South should play low smoothly.

When North gets in with the ♦ A, they will know that South has the ♠ J and ♠ Q as declarer would have won with one of them.

Board 5
North Deals
N-S Vul

♠ Q J 10 9 3
♥ 9 8 5 4
♦ J 7
♣ 5 4

♠ 5 4 2
♥ 6 2
♦ 6 4 3
♣ K Q 10 3 2

♠ A K 8
♥ A K 7
♦ A Q 9 5
♣ J 9 7

♠ 7 6
♥ Q J 10 3
♦ K 10 8 2
♣ A 8 6

| | | | |
|------|----------|------|-------|
| West | North | East | South |
| 3 NT | Pass | 2 NT | Pass |
| | All pass | | |

Lead : ♥ Q

North encourages with the ♥ 4. When declarer plays clubs, South must hold up the ace until the 3rd round which will restrict West's club tricks to 2.

North will eventually get in with the ♥ 9 and should exit with the ♠ Q which should result in declarer going 2 light.

Board 6
East Deals
E-W Vul

♠ A 10 6 4 3
♥ 9 3
♦ 6 5 2
♣ Q 10 8

♠ Q J 7
♥ K 6 5
♦ 7 4 3
♣ K 7 4 3

♠ 5 2
♥ A Q 8 2
♦ K Q J 10
♣ A J 2

♠ K 9 8
♥ J 10 7 4
♦ A 9 8
♣ 9 6 5

| | | | |
|------|----------|------|-------|
| West | North | East | South |
| 1 NT | Pass | 1 ♦ | Pass |
| 3 NT | All pass | 2 NT | Pass |

Lead: small spade

South wins the opening lead with the ♠ K and returns the ♠ 9. North should duck a round to keep communication with partner. When South wins ♦ A, a spade can be returned to North.

If North plays ♠ A too early and clears the spades, declarer can finesse clubs and make an overtrick.

Board 7
South Deals
Both Vul

♠ K 9 3
♥ J 2
♦ Q 8 6
♣ Q 6 5 4 3

♠ 10 7
♥ 9 8 7 4
♦ K 9 4 3
♣ A 10 2

♠ 8 5 4 2
♥ 6 5
♦ A J 7 5
♣ J 9 8

♠ A Q J 6
♥ A K Q 10 3
♦ 10 2
♣ K 7

| | | | |
|----------|-------|------|-------|
| West | North | East | South |
| Pass | 1 NT | Pass | 1 ♥ |
| All pass | | | 3 NT |

Lead: ♦ 5

West wins ♦ K and should return the ♦ 3. East now knows that West started with either 2 or 4 diamonds.

When in with the ♦ J, East can safely play the ♦ A. The defence can then win four diamond tricks and the ♠ A to defeat the contract.

Board 8
West Deals
None Vul

♠ K Q 10 5
♥ K 3
♦ 10 9 4 3
♣ Q 9 5

♠ J 9 8 7 4
♥ Q 7 4
♦ Q 6
♣ K 6 4

♠ 3
♥ A J 9 6 2
♦ A 8 7 5
♣ A 8 2

♠ A 6 2
♥ 10 8 5
♦ K J 2
♣ J 10 7 3

| | | | |
|------|----------|------|-------|
| West | North | East | South |
| Pass | Pass | 1 ♥ | Pass |
| 1 ♠ | Pass | 2 ♦ | Pass |
| 2 ♥ | All pass | | |

Lead: ♣ J

North encourages with the ♣ 5. Declarer should now play towards the ♦ Q. South wins ♦ K and continues clubs.

If declarer now crosses to the ♦ Q and plays ♥ Q, North must cover with ♥ K to attempt to promote a card in partner's hand. Partner now wins the ♥ 10.