

Anti-Discovery Play

Against three notrump, West led the ♥Q and declarer held up on the first trick. West continued the suit, and declarer had to decide whether to win this or hold up again. Looking only at the North-South hands what would be your choice?

If the heart suit is 4-3 then it's a good idea to hold up a second time, that way, if the diamonds don't break, it may be possible to develop the clubs for a total of nine tricks, without the defense scoring five tricks first. But if hearts are 5-2 then the second hold-up is pointless.

At trick one declarer had no idea of the heart situation. Clearly the king was with East, but West's opening lead could have been from Qx or QJx or QJ9x or QJ9xx, all were equally likely as a heart opening lead was almost inevitable given the auction. But at trick two all became clear when East played the jack. Now, unless West was a remarkably slippery customer, given to making extravagant opening leads, surely the suit was 5-2. So, declarer won the second trick, and played diamonds from the top. When that suit didn't break, declarer ducked a club to West, who could cash a couple of diamonds. But that was all for the defense, scoring those two diamonds, a club, and only one heart.

Board 3

South Deals
E-W Vul

♠ J 6
♥ 8 6 2
♦ A K Q 6 4 2
♣ 6 3



♠ A 10 9 2
♥ A 10 5
♦ 8
♣ A K 10 9 8

West	North	East	South
			1 ♣
Pass	1 ♦	Pass	1 ♠
Pass	3 ♦	Pass	3 NT
All pass			

Lead: ♥ Q

♠ J 6
♥ 8 6 2
♦ A K Q 6 4 2
♣ 6 3

♠ K 7 5		♠ Q 8 4 3
♥ Q 3		♥ K J 9 7 4
♦ J 10 9 7 5		♦ 3
♣ Q 7 5		♣ J 4 2

♠ A 10 9 2
♥ A 10 5
♦ 8
♣ A K 10 9 8

In order to beat the contract, East must practice the art of concealment. At trick two, if he plays the ♥K, then declarer will be none the wiser. Now it will appear to declarer that West has led from ♥QJ93, in which case a second hold-up is required. But, in fact, it turns out to be fatal, that second heart trick for the defense will result in the ultimate defeat of the contract.