

ALEX'S BRIDGE TIP

	North	
	D J84	
West		East
D A1062		D K95
	South	
	D Q73	

At some point, on each hand that you defend, your side gets in, part way through the hand, having won a trick.

What we see often as Declarers is that you, as an opponent, now proceed to "GIVE" a trick to the opponents. By this I mean that you are giving them a trick to which they were not entitled.

"The way you do that is by "breaking" a new suit. i.e. Starting a new suit instead of just continuing on with the suit with which you started OR by letting Declarer win a trick that she was always going to get (such as a singleton Ace that is sitting in dummy...if you lead that, she wins it but she was always winning that trick).

Leading Top of a Sequence (e.g. QJ10) is a perfect example of never helping Declarer. You are never giving away a trick when you lead Top of a Sequence.

Look at the layout of the Diamond suit above. If Declarer has to play the Diamond suit herself, she will score NO Diamond tricks. Let's say the contract is 4H and trumps have been drawn. Declarer leads the D 3 towards dummy's J. West plays low (second hand low on first round) and East eats dummy's Jack with her King.

Later, Declarer tries to win a trick with her Queen (assuming East West do not continue the suit) and leads a small Diamond from dummy towards her hand (South). 4 - 5 - Q and West wins the Ace and now takes the D 10 also.

BUT if West leads a Diamond part way through the hand, when the suit has never been led before ("Breaking" or opening the suit), then Declarer WILL easily score a Diamond trick.

The only time it is right to "break" or start a new suit is when you see a long running suit in dummy such as AKQxx in a side suit (a non-trump suit). Now it looks as though your potential tricks may get discarded on that suit which is a threat to your side. In that case, it is right to try to cash some tricks in another suit before they get discarded.

If there is no long suit and it does not look as though Declarer can make discards, it is best to proceed with passive defence, unless you have sure tricks to cash. e.g. Just lead a suit where dummy has an Ace singleton remaining in Dummy. Declarer is always entitled to that trick.

“THE DOG DID NOTHING IN THE NIGHT TIME”

by Andrew Robson

North Deals	♠ J 5 3		
None Vul	♥ A K 4 3 2		
	♦ J		
	♣ K J 9 4		
♠ 10 8 4		♠ A 7 6 2	
♥ Q J 9		♥ 10 8 6	
♦ 10 6 4		♦ K Q 9 7 2	
♣ 8 7 5 2		♣ 3	
	♠ K Q 9		
	♥ 7 5		
	♦ A 8 5 3		
	♣ A Q 10 6		

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
	1 ♥	Pass	2 ♣
Pass	3 ♣	Pass	3 NT
All pass			

"Is there any point to which you would wish to draw my attention?"

"To the curious incident of the dog in the night-time."

"The dog did nothing in the night-time."

"That was the curious incident," remarked Sherlock Holmes.

Inspector Gregory and Sherlock Holmes in "Silver Blaze".

Let's look at the Defence by considering how the auction can impact on the opening lead. You must listen carefully to the bids made, but also, less obviously, listen to the bids that weren't made.

What happened?

West gave cursory thought to the bidding when deciding on his opening lead against the 3 NT game. "Not hearts or clubs, the opponents' suits", he began. So far so good. Between spades and diamonds, with identical holdings, he guessed to lead the unbid major, spades (Ed. note: That is customary strategy to lead the unbid major.)

No good. East won S A and switched belatedly to D K, but declarer could win D A, then cash four clubs, H A K, and the promoted S K Q. Nine tricks - game made.

What should have happened?

West needs to find his partner's suit, in order to have a hope of beating 3 NT. But East cannot have a decent five-card spade suit, or he would have overcalled 1 S. (All he needs is 8 points and a five-card decent quality spade suit.)

However a two-level overcall is a different beast, requiring more, so it was entirely possible that East held a decent five-card diamond suit. but was not strong enough to make a two-level overcall. Ergo West should have led a diamond.

On D 4 lead, to D J and D Q, declarer cannot make 3 NT. East presses on with diamonds until declarer takes his D A, and, with declarer unable to cash nine winners without touching spades, East has the S Ace entry to cash his remaining winners in the Diamond suit. Down one.

Footnote: Did you notice that North-South can make 6 ♣? Hard to bid though!

If you remember one thing...Reflect on what partner didn't bid. Partner did NOT overcall 1 Spade.

Ed note: Many South's would have bid 3NT immediately as a response to the 1H opener showing 13-15 HCP and specifically two of partner's major. Other players agree that the immediate response of 3NT to partner's one of a major shows 13-15 HCP and three of partner's major. All that matters is that you and partner agree (before playing) as to the meaning of this bid.

BIDDING TRAPS - WILL YOU FALL IN? By Eddie Kantar

You start this quiz with 50 bonus points (you're welcome), but... you lose 10 points for each 'accident' you have. Sorry about that.

You are always **South**...Ready?

1. S. AQ10xx H. Axx D. Kxx C. xx

North	East	South	West
Pass	Pass	1S	Pass
1NT	Pass	?	

2. S. AKQxx H. xx D. K982 C. xx

South	West	North	East
1S	Pass	2C	Pass
?			

3. S. AQ109xxx H. K D. AK C. AKx

South	West	North	East
2C	Pass	2D*	Pass
2S	Pass	3S	Pass
4NT	Pass	5H**	Pass
?			

* Waiting ** 2 Key Cards

4. S. Qx H. AQxxx D. xx C. KQxx

South	West	North	East
1H	Pass	1S	2D
?			

5. S. AKxxx H. Qxx D. xx C. AQx

South	West	North	East
1S	Pass	2C	Pass
?			

1. Pass. The trap is not to rebid 2S which shows six spades in this sequence. And playing 2/1: Pass.

2. 2D The trap is rebidding 2S and not showing diamonds, a lower ranking suit, showing at least a 5-4 hand.

3. 7NT The trap is bidding anything else when you can count 13 tricks: 7 spades, 2 hearts, 2 diamonds and at least two clubs. Playing the hand in 7S runs the risk, admittedly slender), of an opening lead getting ruffed.

4. Pass. You have a minimum and partner still has a chance to bid again. The trap is bidding 3C which shows extras or 2H which shows a stronger suit.

5. 3C A raise to the three level in this sequence either shows three card or better support. You have no diamond stopper & your heart stopper is shaky so best not to bid NT at this point in the auction.