

TUESDAY JUNE 23
AVOIDANCE PLAYS

A) 2

AQ10987

B) A2

Q10987

C) KQ10

65432

In A and B, you are only concerned about maximizing your chances when the suit breaks 4-2. In A it would be a guess to finesse the Queen or the 10 assuming a 3-3 break. Either would work depending on whether you find Jxx or Kxx on side. However when you consider the possibility of 4-2 breaks it becomes clear that finessing the Queen is the right answer. By finessing the Queen you pick up all Jack singletons and doubletons.

In B, Cash the Ace and lead toward the Queen. Again, assuming only low cards play the Queen. If you play the 10 and lose to the doubleton King you still have to lose to Jxxx. So the idea is always to pick up doubleton Jack.

In C lead toward the KQ10. Assuming only low cards, win the King and lead toward the Queen. This will take 4 tricks when the suit is 3-2 and the Ace is onside. If the King is taken with the Ace on the first round, play the Queen on the second round. You will again win against all doubleton Jacks.

Board 1

North Deals
None Vul

♠ J 8 7 5
♥ 5 3
♦ K J 10 9 5
♣ A K

♠ 6
♥ A J 10 7
♦ 3
♣ J 10 9 8 7 6 5

	N	
W		E
	S	

♠ Q 9 3
♥ Q 9 8 6 4
♦ Q 8 6
♣ Q 2

♠ A K 10 4 2
♥ K 2
♦ A 7 4 2
♣ 4 3

West North East South

1 ♦ Pass 1 ♠

Pass 2 ♠ Pass 4 ♠

Pass Pass Pass

4 ♠ by South

Lead: ♣ J

We seem to have lots of tricks. But we are playing imps so lets see what could go wrong. If everything is bad we could lose a spade, two hearts and a diamond. If we were to blindly follow the rule of "eight ever, nine never", we could easily go down. Win the club lead and play a spade to the Ace. Go back to the Club King and finesse the spade. Then after drawing trumps, play a diamond to the King and run the jack through east. We want to keep east off lead at all costs to prevent the dangerous heart shift.

Board 2 ♠ 4 3
 East Deals ♥ A 8 2
 N-S Vul ♦ A K 10 9 5
 3
 ♣ K 6

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

 ♠ K 5 2
 ♥ K 9 3
 ♦ Q 8
 ♣ A 9 8 7 2

West North East South

Pass 1 ♣

Pass 1 ♦ Pass 1 NT

Pass 3 NT Pass Pass

Pass

3 NT by South

Lead: ♥ 5

Well we escaped the spade lead. Perhaps the Spade Ace is onside, but there is a 100% line of play assuming diamonds are no worse than 4-1. Win the heart lead in the dummy and lead a diamond to the 8. Win or lose you have nine tricks.

Board 3 ♠ 7 5
 South Deals ♥ A K 7 6
 E-W Vul ♦ J 8 3
 ♣ A Q 10 9

♠ K Q J 10 9 6		♠ 8 4
♥ 9 5 2		♥ J 10 4 3
♦ K		♦ 7 6 4
♣ 4 3 2		♣ K J 6 5

	N	
W		E
	S	

♠ A 3 2
 ♥ Q 8
 ♦ A Q 10 9 5 2
 ♣ 8 7

West North East South

			1 ♦
2 ♠	Dbl	Pass	3 ♦
Pass	3 ♠	Pass	3 NT
Pass	Pass	Pass	

3 NT by South
 Lead: ♠ K

Clearly we need to duck 2 rounds of Spades. Then after a low heart to the Ace, we can take the safety play of the Diamond Jack (sometimes they cover) to the Ace. We don't mind losing a trick to east, the important thing is to avoid losing a trick to west. he has all those spades waiting to cash.

Board 4 ♠ J 7 6
 West Deals ♥ A 4
 Both Vul ♦ 9 7 2
 ♣ A K 7 6 4

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

♠ A K Q 8 3 2
 ♥ 6
 ♦ K 8 6
 ♣ 9 8 5

West North East South
 1 ♥ Pass Pass 2 ♠
 Pass 4 ♠ Pass Pass
 Pass
 Lead: ♥ K

A couple of words about the auction. North might be tempted to overcall 2C but many experts would avoid doing so without a sixth club. Overcalling on AKxxx at the two level can lead to minus 1400 territory. A takeout double with the North hand would actually be more reasonable. It is a lot safer to offer multiple places to play than only one place. If North and East pass, South gets to use an intermediate jump overcall. In the passout seat there is no reason to preempt the auction. With weak hands, simply pass. A jump overcall in the passout seat shows 12-16 points and a good 6 card suit.

With the Heart Ace led the object is to develop the club suit without letting East in for the damaging diamond shift. The answer is to duck the Heart Ace. Pitch a Club on the second Heart and then draw two rounds of trumps with the Ace and the King, cash two clubs and ruff a club high, then lead a trump to the Jack for the good clubs and two diamond pitches.