

Issue 16: October 25, 2010 BridgeHands Newsletter



**Transportation is our Friend
Unblock, Finesse, Hold-up, Threat, Duck**

October 26, 2010

Dear Bridge Friend,

Welcome to **BridgeHands** eMag Newsletter, Issue 16 for Newcomers and Novice Bridge players. Back here at **BridgeHands** we have been very busy retooling our website to offer you many exciting new offerings. Teaser alert - some of our new features are available now with others coming very soon. In a coming issue we will give you a full rundown of the changes. But if you'd like a glimpse of changes at our Bridge Blog, [feel free to peek and poke around here](#).

The good news is that now we can begin producing our Newsletters on a regular basis. Gone are the days of the 10+ page newsletters - look for articles that are short, sweet, and to the point. And of course, we are always interested to hear your feedback at support@BridgeHands.com

On our coming series of articles, we will explore the exciting world of transportation – at least at the Bridge table. Being blocked, stranded, stymied, stuck, snookered, obstructed or whatever you choose to call it can be a bewildering moment.

The same can be true for our poor declarer, wanting to play a card from the other hand, typically the dummy yet lacking an entry card to long lonely suit. Come to think about it, leading from the top of a sequence serves the same purpose, promoting a long suit. Enter the world of Bridge transportation - having the ability to play up to a winner in your partner's hand. Of course, there's always more to an iceberg than meets the eye so expect some twists and turns for the defenders, too.

Note: Viewing the hands below requires your EMAIL reader to use "fixed fonts" (not proportional). If you have problems reading this document, please view our [online web-based copy](#) or [Adobe Acrobat PDF file](#) suitable for printing.

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Introduction to Transportation – Time for a Promotion!

Recall our three favorite techniques to win extra tricks:

1. Promote a long suit, discarding losers in other hand
2. Finessing a suit with broken honors
3. Ruffing losers, typically trumping declarer's losers in dummy

The above rank order underscores declarer's top tactics.

The rank order also highlights declarer's priority where careful transportation management recurs with regularity. So let's begin our journey by reinforcing our understanding of suit promotion.

On these hands, how many tricks are available?

Playing in Notrump, how many times must we lose the lead before establishing our tricks?

1. A K Q
J 10 9
2. A J 10 4
K Q 3 2
3. A 7 6 5 4
K 10 9

	Times Lose Lead	Trick Possible
1.	0	3 of 3
2.	0	4 of 4
3.	1+ (to Queen, etc)	4 of 5, assume 3-2 split (A K 7 6)

4. Q J 10 5 4
A K 9

5. J 10 9 8
K Q 7 6

6. Q 9 8 7 6 5
J 10 2

	Times Lose Lead	Trick Possible
4.	0	5 of 5, careful play – see below
5.	1 (to Ace)	3 of 4 (K Q J)
6.	2 (to Ace, King)	4 of 6 (Q J 9 8), slow tricks – see below

What can we say about transportation on these hands?

1. A K Q
J 10 9

North must win all 3 tricks, South cannot obtain the lead - no suit entry.

2. A J 10 4
K Q 3 2

Of 4 tricks, South can win 1 or 2 tricks, declarer's option. If for some reason you require 3 entries to North's hand, you could play either the King or Queen and overtake (smother) it with the Ace. The 3 entries would be the Ace, Jack and 10.

3. A 7 6 5 4
K 10 9

If suit break 3-2 for opponents, 3 tricks are available for North, 1 for South. But what if you didn't have any outside entries into North's hand? If that were the case, the sequence of playing the cards is critical. Instead of beginning with the Ace-King, here's the correct order:

- a. Lose either the first or second trick.
- b. Win the initial trick in the South hand.
- c. The key here is to win the third trick in the dummy (Ace this time).

Assuming a normal 3-2 split (about two-thirds of the time), after winning the third trick in North's hand we have earned two extra tricks.

Here's a general tip - "First win with the high card (honor) from the short length side."

If we were to win either the first or second trick with North's Ace, the hand is stranded - sorry, no more entries.

How sad, too bad.

Love, Dad (wink)

By the way, losing the necessary trick to promote the long suit in North's hand is known as a ducking or a hold-up play.

4. Q J 10 5 4
A K 9

Okay, here's your chance to demonstrate you understand the concept of playing the HIGH card/s from the SHORT side. Again, assume no side suit entries to North's hand. On the first two tricks, what cards should be played from South's hands? Great - the Ace and the King. Initially winning a high card from North's hand would strand two lovely tricks. So the correct sequence is: win the Ace, next win the King, then play the 9 to North's Queen. Voila, now you can cash the Jack and 10 for five winners. Way to go.

5. J 10 9 8
K Q 7 6

After driving out opponents Ace, you have 3 tricks. If you needed 2 entries into North's hand, what cards would you play? Begin with South's King-Queen. After the Ace is played, you win the Queen. Now you have two entries to North's hand. What if instead you needed 2 entries into South's hand? Then you would first play North's Jack-10 to drive out the Ace. Okay so far?

6. Q 9 8 7 6 5
J 10 2

Assume no outside entries to North's hand. What are your thoughts on play this time? Be careful, dangerous road ahead! Here you MUST NOT play North's Queen until the third trick. While South's Jack and 10 don't look all that high, in fact they are higher than everything but the Queen in North's hand. So again we live by the rule - first play the HIGH cards from the SHORT length side. Later in this series, as defenders we will explore counter-tactics to disrupt declarer's transportation. Here's a prelude to a later lesson. Let's say you held East's hand:

Q 9 8 7 6 5
4 A K 3
J 10 2

Assuming the above strategy, as East do you see a way to disrupt the "communication line" to North's hand? Let's say you too played LOW on the first trick, winning the second and later the third trick. Now what? Here's the hands after trick 2:

Q 9 8 7
-- A
2

Oh oh, this time when East was clever enough to also use a hold-up play and duck an initial trick, poor South finds North's hand is stranded. Finally, let's examine a classic example illustrating how thoughtful pre-planning can generate extra tricks. Okay, put on your thinking cap and off we go. . .

Dealer: South Vul: None Contract: 3N, South	North ♠ 4 3 ♥ 4 3 2 ♦ Q J 10 ♣ A K 8 6 2	
West ♠ A J 9 <u>2</u> ♥ Q 9 8 ♦ 5 4 3 2 ♣ J 10		East ♠ <u>Q</u> 10 5 ♥ K 7 6 5 ♦ 9 8 7 6 ♣ Q 9
	South ♠ <u>K</u> 8 7 6 ♥ A J 10 ♦ A K ♣ 7 5 4 3	

The auction goes smoothly, 1N – 3N. West leads the Spade 2 and it's time to plan the play. Unfortunately, we have a duplication of value in Diamonds – a bit of bad luck there. Luckily, we have a 9 card Club suit so if the Club divide 2-2 (a 40 percent chance), we will win 1 Spade (winning the Spade King on trick 1), 3 Diamonds, 5 Clubs, and 1 Heart for 10 tricks. Yet to capitalize on all of our tricks, we must carefully orchestrate our play to ensure 10 winners – how do we do it? Tip – the cards you play on trick 2-4 are critical. Good luck, partner.

After winning the Spade Ace, we must win the Diamond Ace, the Diamond King and then play the Club 7 on trick 4, 5 or 6. Here's why. First playing the Diamond Ace-King is important since you only have two entries to the dummy. Remember our guide - play the HIGH honor cards from the short suit side; this promotes the dummy Diamond Queen. Good going so far. Now focus on South's Clubs. I mean **REALLY** focus on the Clubs! Sure the Club 7 looks like a lowly card but it ***IS*** bigger than dummy North's Club 6, right? So if you don't unblock the Club 7 before you play the fourth Club in dummy, oops! You would be blocked in South's hand with the crummy Club 7 - geesh! Well, we've all been there with you. Is it true that the more painful lesson, the better we remember the consequence?

BridgeHands Back Issues

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[Issue 5 - Trumps are wild - Part 1](#)

[Issue 6 - Trumps are wild - Part 2](#)

[Issue 7 - Captaincy](#)

[Issue 8 - Orchestrating Notrump Contracts](#)

[Issue 9 - Notrump Bidding - Part 1](#)

[Issue 10 - More Notrump Bidding Gymnastics - Part 2](#)

[Issue 11 - Preemptive Opening Bids - Part 1](#)

[Issue 12 - Preemptive Opening Bids - Part 2](#)

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Happy Trails,

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