

MATCHPOINT DECLARER PLAY DISCUSSION

At matchpoints, your goal is to get a higher score than the field.
When you see Dummy, ask yourself, "What is the field contract?"

You and Partner have arrived at the normal contract

- A "normal" contract is one most of the field will reach.
- Your goal is to do the same or better than the field.
- Take risks which offer over 50% chance of success.
 - If a contract-risking finesse is likely to produce an overtrick, take it.
 - If a contract-risking line-of-play is likely to produce an overtrick, do it.
- Board 1 and Board 2 are examples of normal contracts.

You have steered into a supernormal (high scoring) contract

- A "supernormal" contract is better than most of the field will reach.
- A close (not so obvious) slam is an example of a supernormal contract.
- Play to protect your good score by playing to make - take no needless risk.

Your Partner has steered you into a subnormal (low-scoring) contract

- A "subnormal" contract is worse than most of the field will reach.
- Ask yourself:
 - "How will the field play the normal contract?"
 - "What will the field result be?"
 - "How can I beat the field result?"
- Play to take an extra trick to beat the normal contract - take a chance.
 - Example: Take a low percentage finesse that the field will eschew.
- If you play the hand as the field does, you will receive few matchpoints.
 - If the field plays RHO for a Queen, you play LHO for the Queen.
 - If the field establishes suit "A", you establish suit "B".
- You have little to lose if your risky play fails.
- Board 3 and Board 4 are examples of subnormal contracts.

MATCHPOINT DECLARER PLAY DEALS

Build, bid, and make a lead for practice deals 101 - 104.
Dummy validates the contract and opening lead.
Accept any uncommon bidding imposed upon you.
Declarer plays the deal, applying matchpoint thinking.
Read commentary after play is completed.

If you have time, you may play deals 1 and 2.

Board 1
East Deals
None Vul

♠ 8 5
 ♥ Q J
 ♦ A K 7 6 5 2
 ♣ 6 4 3

♠ Q J 10 9 6
 ♥ 9 7 3
 ♦ Q 10 9
 ♣ 10 7

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

♠ A K 3
 ♥ K 6 5 2
 ♦ 8 4
 ♣ A K Q 2

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

3 NT (NORMAL) by South

Lead: ♠ Q

Declarer has seven top winners in this normal 3NT contract. To guarantee nine-trick contract: Promote two ♥ tricks. Easy. But to try for 10 tricks: Win the 2nd ♠ trick, then duck a ♦. If ♦ suit divides 3-2, Declarer has 10 tricks (at least). But, if the suit divides 4-1 (28%), a third ♠ will remove Declarer's last stopper. Then, if defender with long ♠s has the ♥Ace entry, 3NT will fail. Cruel. Extra-time bonus: How might Declarer get 11 tricks?

Board 2
West Deals
N-S Vul

♠ J 9 7 3
 ♥ A K 5 4
 ♦ 6 4 3
 ♣ 8 2

♠ 5
 ♥ Q 9 6 2
 ♦ A Q 9 8
 ♣ J 7 6 4

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

♠ A K Q 10 8
 ♥ J 3
 ♦ K 5 2
 ♣ A K 3

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
Pass	Pass	Pass	1 ♠
Pass	2 ♠	Pass	4 ♠
All pass			

4 ♠ (NORMAL) by South

Lead: ♥ 2

Made 6 — NS +680 (top score)

Declarer has ten easy winners in this normal 4♠ contract. Is the ♥ finesse a good idea? What could happen if it fails?

Extra-time bonus: Suppose South wins T1 with the ♥Jack, trumps a third-round ♣, then plays plays trumps. If he believes that West has the ♦Ace, how can he make 12 tricks? (Squeeze)

Board 3
North Deals
None Vul

♠ K 2
 ♥ A Q 2
 ♦ A K 3 2
 ♣ J 9 3 2

♠ —
 ♥ —
 ♦ —
 ♣ —

♠ —	♠	—
♥ —	♥	—
♦ —	♦	—
♣ —	♣	—

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

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
	1 NT	Pass	2 ♣
Pass	2 ♦	Pass	3 ♠
Pass	4 ♠?	All pass	

4 ♠ (OOPS) by South

Lead: ♦ J

Is your contract normal? No. What will the field result be? In the field 3NT, Declarer will play ♠King, ♠ finesse. If the ♠Queen (doubleton or tripleton) is in the East, 11 tricks for +460. If the ♠Queen is in West, 10 tricks for +430. If you play the ♠ suit normally, you will get +450 or +420. Realize that if you take the same number of tricks, you will get a zero. So you had best play the ♠ suit abnormally! Run the ♠Jack

Board 4
North Deals
N-S Vul

♠ A K 10 4 3 2
 ♥ 2
 ♦ A 10 8 4
 ♣ J 4

♠ —
 ♥ —
 ♦ —
 ♣ —

♠ —	♠	—
♥ —	♥	—
♦ —	♦	—
♣ —	♣	—

♠ Q J
 ♥ K J 3
 ♦ J 9 3 2
 ♣ A K 3 2

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
	<i>Normal Bidder</i>		<i>Hand Hog</i>
	1 ♠	Pass	2 ♣
Pass	2 ♠	Pass	3 NT?
All pass			

3 NT (OOPS) by South

<i>Trick</i>	<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
1. W	♥ 6	♥ 2	♥ 10	♥ J

Is the contract normal? No. What will the field result be? In 4♠, Declarer will draw trump, then take two ♦ finesses - likely taking 11 tricks for +650. Hog can cash out ten tricks for +630 and a zero. Or, is there a way to get 11 trick for +660 and a top? Hog has nothing to lose by trying - he needs to beat +650.

Board 101
West Deals
N-S Vul

♠ K 8 7
 ♥ J 9
 ♦ J 10 9 7
 ♣ Q 8 7 6

♠ A J 10 4 ♥ 5 4 3 2 ♦ A 3 2 ♣ 3 2	N W E S
---	-------------------

♠ Q 9 6 5
 ♥ 10 8
 ♦ Q 8 6
 ♣ K J 10 9

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
1 ♥	Pass	2 ♥	Pass
3 ♥	Pass	4 ♥	All pass

4 ♥ by West

Lead: ♦ J

Made 5 — EW +650 (good score)

READ COMMENTARY AFTER PLAY IS COMPLETED.

Ten easy tricks. The double ♠ finesse is likely to produce an eleventh trick, but will lead to down one if South has both ♠ royals. Playing matchpoints, the risk is worth taking.

Defense: Lead ♦s early and often. If Declarer squanders ♦Ace at T1, North rises second-hand with ♠King to remove ♠Ace.

Board 102
North Deals
Both Vul

♠ 6 5 4
 ♥ A Q 9 8 7
 ♦ K Q J 6
 ♣ 2

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

♠ J 3 2
 ♥ K J 10
 ♦ A 3 2
 ♣ A 5 4 3

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
1 ♥	Pass	2 NT	
Pass	3 ♦	Pass	3 ♥
Pass	4 ♥	All pass	

4 ♥ by North

Lead: ♣ K

Made 5 — NS +650 (good score)

READ COMMENTARY AFTER PLAY IS COMPLETED.

Ten easy tricks again. Declarer can make eleven tricks by trumping three ♣s in hand before drawing trump; then drawing trump with Dummy's trump. If trump split 3-2, this will generate a good score. If trump split 4-1, the dummy reversal will be a jarring failure. But, the matchpoint risk is well worth taking.

Board 103
West Deals
N-S Vul

♠ 9 7
 ♥ 10 8 6 5
 ♦ Q 8 5
 ♣ 10 9 7 5

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

♠ Q J 10 8 4
 ♥ 7 3
 ♦ 7 2
 ♣ Q 8 4 3

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
<i>Mad Raiser</i>		<i>Mad Blackwooder</i>	
1 ♦	Pass	1 ♥	Pass
2 ♥?	Pass	4 NT	Pass
5 ♥	Pass	6 ♥	All pass

6 ♥ by East

Lead: ♠ Q

Made 7 — EW +1010 (top score)

READ COMMENTARY AFTER PLAY IS COMPLETED.

Is contract normal? No. What is the normal contract? 6NT. How will 6NT fare? If ♦Queen is in South, 13 tricks. How can I beat the field? Must play for North to hold ♦Queen - run the ♦Jack.

Board 104
North Deals
N-S Vul

♠ K J 2
 ♥ A
 ♦ A 9 7 4 2
 ♣ J 10 5 4

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

♠ A Q 4 3
 ♥ K 6 3
 ♦ K 5 3
 ♣ A 9 3

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
1 ♦	Pass	1 ♠	
Pass	2 ♠	Pass	4 ♠?
All pass			

4 ♠ by South

Lead: ♥ J

Made 6 — NS +680 (top score)

READ COMMENTARY AFTER PLAY IS COMPLETED.

Is contract normal? No. What is the normal contract? 3NT. How will 3NT fare? If ♦ are 3-2, 11 tricks. How can I beat the field? Ruff a ♥ for a 12th trick and a top score. Careful, entries to Declarer's hand are a problem. Duck a ♦ at trick two to build the ♦ suit and keep entries fluid. Then ruff a ♥ with the ♠Two.