

# Playing for overtricks at pairs and at teams



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**Game All. Dealer South.**

♠ A 8 7  
♥ K Q 7 6 5  
♦ A 5 3  
♣ 9 2

♠ Q J 2  
♥ A 2  
♦ 7 4 2  
♣ K Q J 10 4

♠ N  
♥ W  
♦ S  
♣ E

PLAYING pairs you arrive in 3NT by South.

West leads the four of spades. What card do you play from dummy?

The lead is clearly fourth highest from a suit headed by an honour. Is there any danger in finessing now?

If it loses, East can win and switch to diamonds. When you tackle the club suit, the defence may be able to take one spade, one club, and three diamonds. However if you rise with the ace of spades, your contract is assured.

Is there any danger in rejecting the finesse?

It is very likely that West has the king, and if you refuse the finesse now, the defence can switch to diamonds when in with the ace of clubs, and you will be too late to develop a second spade trick. If the spade finesse is working, you will score very poorly by settling for nine tricks.

At pairs, you should take the slight risk for your contract and finesse, making at least an overtrick whenever West has led from the king.

Now consider the problem playing teams or rubber bridge. What card do you play to trick one now?

Although it looks likely that the spade finesse will work given the opening lead, there is too much danger of a diamond switch if it fails. If the opponents switch to diamonds before your clubs are established the contract might fail. You should therefore guarantee your contract by rising with the ace of spades and then play to establish your clubs. The full deal is shown below:

♠ A 8 7  
♥ K Q 7 6 5  
♦ A 5 3  
♣ 9 2

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

♠ N  
♥ W  
♦ S  
♣ E

♠ K 5  
♥ 10 9 8 3  
♦ Q J 10 9  
♣ A 8 6

♠ Q J 2  
♥ A 2  
♦ 7 4 2  
♣ K Q J 10 4

This is a good example of how the scoring method can affect your approach to the play.

## FREDDIE NORTH 1921 – 2009

WE are sad to announce the death of Freddie North, one of the last surviving giants of the rubber bridge era as well as a very popular bridge teacher and writer.

Frederick Lumsden North was born in Southsea in 1921. He joined a young soldiers' battalion at the age of 17; by 1945, he had reached the rank of Major in the Queen's Royal Regiment. As a dashing young man, he had been a proficient rugby player as well as an accomplished horse-race rider.

Freddie North was one of England's first bridge professionals. In 1950, he opened The Sussex School of Bridge, which flourished until his retirement in 2000. He also worked for P&O, organising bridge on cruise ships. In over fifty years of playing and teaching bridge, Freddie also contributed regular columns to most of the English bridge magazines, and wrote more than twenty bridge books, some in collaboration with Jeremy Flint. His technical knowledge as well as his elegant style of writing, lucid and gently humorous, gained him the admiration of tens of thousands of readers.

Although primarily a very successful high-stakes rubber bridge player, Freddie also excelled at duplicate, becoming one of the EBU's first Grand Masters. He won the National Pairs (1952), the Pachabo (1959, 1962) representing Sussex – of which he was President for nearly thirty years – as well as the Gold Cup (1962) and Crockfords (1967). He partnered some of the greatest players of his time, such as Flint and Harrison-Gray.

Freddie represented Great Britain in the World Pairs Olympiad of 1962 and 1966, and in the 1962 World Pairs. He also played for England in several Camrose matches in the late 1950s and 1960s.

Freddie North lived in Sussex, together with his wife, Margaret, and their dog, Sasha. He kept writing until the end; ever the professional, he was preparing his next set of articles for *English Bridge* when pneumonia and a previously undiagnosed lung cancer brought a swift end to his long and full life.

Our sympathies go to Margaret and Freddie's family. He will be sorely missed by all his friends and readers.

### Heather's Hints

- Playing pairs, you should be prepared to take a small risk in order to make an overtrick, *provided* that you have reached what you consider to be a normal contract.
- Playing teams or rubber bridge, you should look to find the safest way to ensure your contract. Don't forget about overtricks altogether, but do not put the contract at risk by playing for them. □