

Endplays With A Twist

These problems come from David Weiss of Pasadena, California. The assertion that the hand calls for an endplay seems as though it ought to give the show away. But these deals are tricky; the endplay follows other key manoeuvres, or may even be unnecessary! Plan the play at IMP scoring.

1

Dealer: South Vul: All

♠ K 8 7
♥ K 10 6 3
♦ 7 6 3
♣ A J 8

N
S

♠ A Q J 10 6 5 4
♥ 4 2
♦ A
♣ 10 6 5

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
—	—	—	1♠
3♦	3♠	Pass	4♠
All Pass			

West leads ♦K against your game.
Plan the play; (Clue: West has singleton ♠9).

3

Dealer: East Vul: NS

♠ A K 8 5
♥ A J 9
♦ A 8 2
♣ K 4 3

N
S

♠ J 4 3
♥ —
♦ K 10 9 6 5 3
♣ A 10 8 2

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
—	—	Pass	Pass
1♥	Dbl	4♥	5♦
Pass	6♦	All Pass	

West leads ♣9; you play low and East plays the jack. You cash ♦K, East playing the queen, but on the next diamond, West discards a heart. Continue.

2

Dealer: South Vul: EW

♠ J 9 6
♥ 10 7 6 2
♦ 6 2
♣ A 6 3 2

N
S

♠ K 7 4
♥ A K Q 9 8 5
♦ K 3
♣ K 5

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
—	—	—	1♥
Pass	2♥	Pass	4♥
All Pass			

West leads ♣10, East playing ♣7.
Plan the play. (Clue: East plays ♥J on the first round of the suit).

4

Dealer: North Vul: NS

♠ A K J
♥ A 7 5
♦ A K 10 8 7 5
♣ K

N
S

♠ Q 9
♥ Q 10 8
♦ 9 6 2
♣ A 6 5 4 2

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
—	2♣	Pass	2♦
Pass	3♦	Pass	4♦
Pass	4NT	Pass	5♦
Pass	6♦	All Pass	

West leads ♣J. When you cash ♦A, East drops the queen. Now what? If you next cash ♦K, West shows out! Don't worry, you're on the right track. What next?

1

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

Contract: 4♠

Lead: ♦K

South should lead ♠Q, overtaking with the king. Then a diamond is ruffed, followed by another spade and another diamond ruff. With the diamonds gone, the endplay is assured. A heart is led, and West's card is covered (on the actual layout, ♥10 is inserted). East must either establish a heart winner in dummy or break clubs, restricting the defence to one trick in that suit.

If ♠9 had not been so kindly contributed, the play would proceed in the same way, except that an extra round of trumps would have to be played in order to allow the elimination of East's diamonds. Note that even if West has the heart ace and declarer 'misguesses' by inserting ♥10, the endplay produces a 10th trick.

2

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

Contract: 4♠

Lead: ♦K

The winning line is to win the club in hand, cash ♠A followed by ♥9 to dummy's 10, and then lead a

diamond towards the king. Whether East takes the first or second diamond, the path is clear. After diamonds are gone, South cashed ♠A and ruffs a club, then crosses to dummy in trumps to play the fourth club. With East having shown out on the third club, the endplay is guaranteed; South pitches a low spade on the last club and claims.

This time, the convenient fall of a blocking trump is crucial. If ♥J had not been so obliging, South would be one entry short and would need co-operation from the defenders or a more fortuitous spade lie to bring home the contract.

3

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

Contract: 6♦

Lead: ♠9

Apparently West is short in both minors. The hearts must be fairly evenly divided, considering East's barrage, and therefore West has quite a few spades. But West has nowhere near an opening bid, of course, and that affords a ray of hope. The crucial play is to cash a high spade from dummy. When East follows with the queen, trust it to be a true card. The endplay is ripe. Put East in with the third trump.

East cannot safely play a club, and so must lead a heart. You have come too far to misplace the cards now. After East exits with ♥K, lead the jack to ruff out the queen. (Why would East lead an honour unless forced to by the possession of both?)

West subsequently has the responsibility of guarding both majors, and cannot withstand the run of trumps.

True, a more judicious view of the diamond suit would have trivialised the contract. But what fun would that have been?

4

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

Contract: 6♦

Lead: ♠J

While it is tempting (and perhaps correct against most defenders) to use your hand entry to take a restricted choice trump finesse after discarding a heart on the club ace, the odds are transformed if East can be relied upon to throw the queen from Q-J-x. Now the goal is to extract as many of East's non-hearts as is possible, so that when the throw-in occurs, a heart exit will be forced.

Overtake ♠J to play ♣A, discarding a heart from dummy. Ruff a club on the table, then cash ♠A. Trump ♠K in hand, then ruff a fourth club in dummy. Finally, toss East in with the high trump. Guess correctly when a heart comes back. So long as East has three spades and no more than four clubs, you're home free. As the cards lie, technique is rewarded because no misguess in hearts is possible.

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