

WHAT NOW MY LOVE?

by DAVID WEISS

Does partner cringe when declarer smiles while saying "It's your lead"? Well then, this quiz is for you. You will always make a successful lead here. I'll help, but you would have found the lead unaided. Of course, your cares do not vanish. If you blow Trick 2, they'll make the contract; and you could have beaten it. All of these deals occurred at IMP scoring.

When you have decided what to play at your second turn, turn over the page for the solutions.

1

| | | | |
|---|-------|---|---|
| ♠ | AKQ84 | | |
| ♥ | 10643 | | |
| ♦ | 106 | | |
| ♣ | 105 | | |
| | | N | E |
| ♠ | 10932 | W | S |
| ♥ | Q2 | | |
| ♦ | AKJ9 | | |
| ♣ | A93 | | |

| | | | |
|----------|-------|------|-------|
| West | North | East | South |
| — | Pass | Pass | 1♥ |
| Dble | Rdble | Pass | 2♥ |
| Pass | 3♥ | Pass | 4♥ |
| All Pass | | | |

You lead the ♦A, which is your conventional lead from ace-king combinations. Partner plays the five and declarer the four. What do you play next?

2

| | | | | |
|---|--------|---------|---|--|
| | ♠ | 10 | | |
| | ♥ | AQ4 | | |
| | ♦ | KQ8 | | |
| | ♣ | A108752 | | |
| | | N | E | |
| ♠ | A87532 | W | S | |
| ♥ | 9853 | | | |
| ♦ | 6 | | | |
| ♣ | K6 | | | |

| | | | |
|------|----------|------|-------|
| West | North | East | South |
| — | 1♣ | 1♦ | 1♥ |
| 1♠ | 3♥ | Pass | 4♥ |
| Dble | All Pass | | |

You lead the ♦6, and are perhaps puzzled by dummy's trump shortage. (You may also be puzzled by the double, but this is not a bidding quiz.) Partner takes the king with the ace, and returns the ♦9. South drops the ♦5 and ♦7 respectively on these two tricks. What do you do?

3

| | | | | |
|---|--------|---------|---|--|
| | ♠ | AQ10932 | | |
| | ♥ | 973 | | |
| | ♦ | Q | | |
| | ♣ | QJ3 | | |
| | | N | E | |
| ♠ | K4 | W | S | |
| ♥ | Q4 | | | |
| ♦ | 10942 | | | |
| ♣ | A10976 | | | |

| | | | |
|------|----------|------|-------|
| West | North | East | South |
| — | 1♠ | 2♦ | 2♥ |
| 2♠ | Dble | 3♥ | Pass |
| 3NT | 4♥ | Pass | Pass |
| Dble | All Pass | | |

You lead the ♦10, which is captured by partner's king. South plays the

five. East returns the ♣5, on which declarer plays the four. You doubled them, now beat them.

4

| | | | | |
|---|-------|-------|---|--|
| | ♠ | 10873 | | |
| | ♥ | KJ52 | | |
| | ♦ | Q6 | | |
| | ♣ | K54 | | |
| | | N | E | |
| ♠ | 652 | W | S | |
| ♥ | Q7 | | | |
| ♦ | K7532 | | | |
| ♣ | QJ7 | | | |

| | | | |
|----------|-------|------|-------|
| West | North | East | South |
| — | — | — | 1♠ |
| Pass | 2♠ | 3♥ | 4♠ |
| All Pass | | | |

Thanks to partner's overall, you have an easy lead. But you are surprised when your queen holds the trick; declarer called low from dummy! Partner plays the ♥10, and South produced the four. What now?

5

| | | | | |
|---|------|-------|---|--|
| | ♠ | AQ53 | | |
| | ♥ | QJ754 | | |
| | ♦ | A8 | | |
| | ♣ | 107 | | |
| | | N | E | |
| ♠ | K6 | W | S | |
| ♥ | A106 | | | |
| ♦ | Q952 | | | |
| ♣ | AK95 | | | |

| | | | |
|------|-------|----------|-------|
| West | North | East | South |
| — | — | — | 2♠ |
| 2NT | 4♠ | All Pass | |

More bold bidding! These folks must think you're easy. You lead the ♣A. Partner plays the six and declarer the deuce. How do you punish North's impudence?

6

| | | | | |
|---|-------|-------|---|--|
| | ♠ | A9762 | | |
| | ♥ | QJ6 | | |
| | ♦ | 742 | | |
| | ♣ | K8 | | |
| | | N | E | |
| ♠ | 105 | W | S | |
| ♥ | 743 | | | |
| ♦ | AK8 | | | |
| ♣ | QJ752 | | | |

| | | | |
|----------|-------|------|-------|
| West | North | East | South |
| — | — | — | 1♠ |
| Pass | 3♠ | Pass | 4♠ |
| All Pass | | | |

You lead the ♦A. Partner plays the jack and declarer the three. What next?

1

| | | | |
|---------|---------|--------|--------|
| ♠ 10932 | ♥ Q2 | ♦ AKJ9 | ♣ A93 |
| ♠ AKQ84 | ♥ 10643 | ♦ 106 | ♣ 105 |
| N | W | E | S |
| ♠ J75 | ♥ 98 | ♦ Q532 | ♣ QJ84 |
| ♠ 6 | ♥ AKJ75 | ♦ 874 | ♣ K762 |

This deal occurred in a world championship. At Trick 2 West attempted to exit passively with a spade. This is demonstrably an error, since with trumps breaking declarer has at least five heart tricks, four spade tricks and a minor-suit ruff available. The hand must be beaten now, with two diamond tricks and two club tricks. Partner needs either the ♣K or the ♦Q and good enough clubs — surely the queen-jack since the auction will resolve any guess as to who has the ace.

Partner's ♦5 is the clue. It is a 'low' diamond only if South has false-carded from Q-4-3-2. While declarer might well have false-carded, he must first have been dealt that specific holding. You got this one right if you played the ♦9 at Trick 2.

2

| | | | |
|----------|---------|-----------|-----------|
| ♠ A87532 | ♥ 9853 | ♦ 6 | ♣ K6 |
| ♠ 10 | ♥ AQ4 | ♦ KQ8 | ♣ A108752 |
| N | W | E | S |
| ♠ J94 | ♥ 62 | ♦ AJ10943 | ♣ Q9 |
| ♠ KQ6 | ♥ KJ107 | ♦ 752 | ♣ J43 |

To achieve a certain plus score, you must play the ♣K on partner's diamond return. This is difficult as well as spectacular, so let's reason it out. You can see that ruffing the trick works only if partner has the ♠K as an immediate entry. Otherwise, declarer, who controls all suits, will simply set up clubs. Your trumps will no longer present a problem.

But partner's ♦9 doesn't look like a signal for spades. Rather, he is indicating a club card. That is why it is safe for you to throw away the king. If you keep it, declarer can arrange for you to win the defence's club trick, and you can't cash the diamond. South will simply draw trumps and lead a club towards dummy.

On the recommended play, South will be forced to wriggle. He will probably

Solutions to WHAT NOW MY LOVE?

try a spade to the king, hoping to get two ruffs in dummy. Just return a club, and your ♥9 allows the defence to triumph.

3

| | | | |
|-----------|-----------|----------|----------|
| ♠ K4 | ♥ Q4 | ♦ 10942 | ♣ A10976 |
| ♠ AQ10932 | ♥ 973 | ♦ Q | ♣ QJ3 |
| N | W | E | S |
| ♠ 765 | ♥ AJ | ♦ AKJ863 | ♣ 52 |
| ♠ J8 | ♥ K108652 | ♦ 75 | ♣ K84 |

You must play an encouraging club, so that you can win the next one and give partner a ruff. To defeat the contract, your side will have to score a trump trick. What else can you get? Two clubs? Is it plausible that partner has the heart and club kings? Then declarer would have five high-card points.

The way to succeed is to place the ♥A in partner's hand. Then your only problem is whether East has one or two clubs. His carding must furnish the clue.

With a club holding that requires an immediate return, East should win the diamond expensively with the ace, in theory denying the king. That is how one normally communicates the idea that another suit should be played. The logical extension of this principle is that winning cheaply connotes less immediacy in the suit to which the shift is made.

The contract was let through in the Bermuda Bowl when West won the club immediately.

4

| | | | |
|---------|-----------|---------|----------|
| ♠ 652 | ♥ Q7 | ♦ K7532 | ♣ QJ7 |
| ♠ 10873 | ♥ KJ52 | ♦ Q6 | ♣ K54 |
| N | W | E | S |
| ♠ 4 | ♥ A109863 | ♦ AJ108 | ♣ 32 |
| ♠ AKQJ9 | ♥ 4 | ♦ 94 | ♣ A10986 |

The correct play is to switch to the ♦K. You can see that South has made a clever play, hoping to pitch if you continue hearts. South knew that your partner would be in a position to lay down a high diamond prior to attempting to give you a heart ruff. East, though, is in the dark. His ♥10 is simply suit-preference to indicate his entry in the diamond suit.

East may be no more enlightened after you play the ♦K and another diamond, but the contract will surely be defeated anyway.

5

| | | | |
|-----------|---------|---------|---------|
| ♠ K6 | ♥ A106 | ♦ Q952 | ♣ AK95 |
| ♠ AQ53 | ♥ QJ754 | ♦ A8 | ♣ 107 |
| N | W | E | S |
| ♠ 4 | ♥ K82 | ♦ 10643 | ♣ J8643 |
| ♠ J109872 | ♥ 93 | ♦ KJ7 | ♣ Q2 |

Did you carefully cash the ♣K before shifting to a diamond? That defence works if partner has either red king, so long as South has at least two hearts. Note that declarer cannot obtain a pitch on the ♣Q even if he has a hand like:

| |
|-----------|
| ♠ J109xxx |
| ♥ Kx |
| ♦ Jx |
| ♣ Qxx |

Your diamond shift will establish the fourth trick before South can get back to hand.

Partner was trying to help you avoid the obvious switch with his mildly encouraging club spot, but even if you couldn't read the card the correct defence is marked.

6

| | | | |
|---------|---------|---------|----------|
| ♠ 105 | ♥ 743 | ♦ AK8 | ♣ QJ752 |
| ♠ A9762 | ♥ QJ6 | ♦ 742 | ♣ K8 |
| N | W | E | S |
| ♠ 4 | ♥ 852 | ♦ J1096 | ♣ A10643 |
| ♠ KQJ83 | ♥ AK109 | ♦ Q53 | ♣ 9 |

You must switch to a club, and should *not* be the queen. You must lead low. If South does not have the ♣A, the king will surely be played, so no harm will have

DEFENCE QUIZ · DEFENCE QUIZ · DEFENCE QUIZ · DEFENCE QUIZ · DEFENCE QUIZ


been done in terms of collecting club tricks due to your side. The problem with the routine play of the queen is that it will surely be ducked by everyone (as happened when this deal was played), and the defence will be finished.

This manoeuvre is counter-intuitive and seems risky, but a careful analysis leads you to it. You can deduce that

South has $\diamond Q-x-x$, as partner would have no reason to show the sequence from five. Since you probably cannot defeat the contract unless partner has an ace, you should assume one. If it is in clubs, the suggested play is correct.

Partner's ace could be in hearts, with the dangerous holding for South being something like:

♠ KQxxx
♥ Kx
♦ Qxx
♣ A10x

I cannot see how to cater to that hand as well as to the actual one. At least the consolation is available that South might have bid, and certainly would have made, 3NT if that hand had  been dealt.