

Presentation Notes

The major theme of this presentation was to recognize a dummy where a passive defense is called for. If dummy has no long suits and no ruffing potential, then defenders do best if declarer is forced to be the first to lead each suit. It is NEVER advantageous to lead a suit first. If a suit is solid, it may not matter who leads it first, but often the side that leads a suit first loses a trick.

Frozen suits

A suit is said to be frozen if it costs a trick to whichever side leads it first. Some suits are immediately frozen; others are frozen after the first trick. These are the examples used in the presentation.

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

It costs a trick to whichever side leads the suit first

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

After the Ace or King is cashed, the suit is frozen. Whichever side leads the suit next loses a trick. Here are some other examples of frozen suit combinations. In each case, the side that breaks the suit loses a trick.

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

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

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

This last one is tricky. If declarer leads the 10 from dummy, what does the defense have to do to prevent declarer from scoring a trick in this suit? The answer is at the end of these notes.

Presentation Hands

South is the dealer. The bidding is 1H – P – 2H – P – 4H all pass.

West leads the Ace of Spades, East plays the deuce. South can make the hand by finessing twice in Clubs and once in Diamonds. Unfortunately, there are only 2 entries to dummy. If West continues Spades at trick 2, it gives South a Spade trick. If West leads either minor, it gives South one of the needed finesses. Therefore, West leads a safe Heart. South can still make the hand with good guesses and good play, but it is much harder. Do you see how South can still make the hand?

	10 6 5	
	A K 3 2	
	8 7 6	
	8 7 6	
<u>A</u> K 9 7		J 8 2
5 4		7 6
5 4 3 2		K J 10 9
5 4 3		K 10 9 2
	Q 4 3	
	Q J 10 9 8	
	A Q	
	A Q J	

South makes the hand by winning the Heart switch in dummy and takes the Club finesse. South goes back to dummy, repeats the Club finesse and cashes the Ace of Clubs. Here's what's left.

	10 6	
	3 2	
	8 7 6	

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

Now South leads either Spade. After taking 2 Spades tricks the defense must either lead a Diamond giving South the needed third finesse or lead a black card which lets South ruff in dummy and sluff the Queen of Diamonds from their hand. Declarer can prevail, but proper defense makes declarer work for their 10 tricks and many won't find the winning line.

South is the dealer. The bidding is 1H – 1S – 3H – P – 4H all pass.

West leads the Ace of Spades. East knows West has at least 5 Spades so signals encouragement with the 8. South has 9 guaranteed tricks; 6 Hearts, 2 Diamonds and 1 Club. If West leads any card at trick 2 except the King of Spades, it gives South a tenth trick. After the high Spade continuation, proper defense will set the contract.

	10 6 5	
	A K 3 2	
	8 7 6	
	Q 6 5	
<u>A</u> K 9 7 3		J 8 2
---		7 6 5
Q 10 9 5		4 3 2
J 9 8 7		A 4 3 2
	Q 4	
	Q J 10 9 8 4	
	A K J	
	K 10	

South is the dealer. The bidding is 1H – P – 2H – P – 4H all pass.

West leads the Ace of Diamonds and East plays the deuce. To set the contract, West must continue Diamonds and give partner a ruff. West doesn't know partner has a singleton, but with proper analysis West can deduce the Diamond continuation can't hurt and might help. Continuing Diamonds and giving partner a ruff is the only way to set this contract.

	10 6 5	
	A K 3 2	
	8 7 6	
	8 7 6	
4 3 2		Q J 9 8 7
5 4		6 5
<u>A</u> K 9 5 4		2
4 3 2		A J 10 9 5
	A K	
	Q J 10 9 8	
	Q J 10 3	
	K Q	

Bonus Hand

The presentation centered on defense when dummy was flat. That's often not the case. For example, look at this hand. This is definitely not a flat dummy.

Both sides are vulnerable, East deals and passes. South opens a weak 2 Spades, North raises to 4 Spades. West leads the King of Diamonds, East plays the 3 and South wins the Ace. At trick 2 South leads the Queen of Hearts. How should West defend (pretend you can't see the other 2 hands)?

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

West's thinking should go along these lines. Declarer doesn't know it yet, but the Clubs are magic. Count declarer's tricks: 5 Spade tricks, 6 Club tricks and the Ace of Diamonds. Declarer doesn't know there are 6 Club tricks, but you do. This is not a hand for the safe lead. It's time to get busy. A Heart lead is called for, but did you think about which Heart. Think about it from partner's point of view. Maybe partner thinks this is how the cards are distributed.

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

Be a good partner, lead the King of Hearts then a low heart to partner. When you lead a low Heart instead of the King, partner may wonder if you can ruff a Club. Partner knows you know your only tricks are in Hearts. Be kind, don't put partner in this position.

Answer to Frozen Suit Question

When the 10 is played from dummy in this suit combination, what should East play?

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

If East plays small, South plays small and West must win the Ace. Now South can lead from dummy toward the Queen and set up a trick. It doesn't do East any good to play the Jack either. South will cover with the Queen, West will win the Ace, but now the suit looks like this.

	9 7	
8 4		K 3 2
	6 5	

South now gets a trick by leading toward dummy and finessing the 7 if West plays low. It turns out the only defense is for East to play a very counter-intuitive second-hand-high and rise with the King. This stops North / South from getting a trick in the suit, but now the suit looks like this

	9 7	
A 8		J 3 2
	Q 6	

And the suit is still frozen. Whichever side leads this suit first forfeits a trick.

As I told you, this is not a game for wimps.