

## ACBL – BRIDGE HAND OF THE WEEK

Prudently by Tim Bourke - Oct 3 2011

Dealer South Vul :N-S	NORTH ♠10 4 ♥A 6 5 ♦J 7 4 2 ♣A Q 10 6	
WEST		EAST
	SOUTH ♠A K 3 ♥K 7 2 ♦K Q 5 ♣J 9 5 4	

North	East	South	West
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3 NT	All Pass		

West leads the ♠6 after your straightforward auction to 3NT. On a very good day, the ♠10 would hold but, as you would expect in a bridge problem, East produces the ♠J. After this setback, how do you plan to make nine tricks?

### Solution

It would be a pity to fall at the first hurdle – on whether you should duck or win the trick. Suppose the full deal is:

Dealer South Vul :N-S	NORTH ♠10 4 ♥A 6 5 ♦J 7 4 2 ♣A Q 10 6	
WEST ♠Q9862 ♥84 ♦10 8 6 3 ♣7 2		EAST ♠J75 ♥QJ1093 ♦A 9 ♣K 8 3
	SOUTH ♠A K 3 ♥K 7 2 ♦K Q 5 ♣J 9 5 4	

If you let the ♠J hold, East will surely shift to the ♥Q very smartly and, as he has two entries to his heart suit, you will lose a spade, three hearts a diamond and a club for two down.

You must win the first trick and decide which minor suit to play next. Clearly you should play on diamonds next because tackling clubs first would see you lose the contract whenever West began with five spades as well as the ♦A and East started with the ♣K. You should, therefore, lead the ♦K next. East will win the ♦A and exit with a spade. This is the point at which it is correct to duck a spade, aiming to sever the link in spades between the defenders' hands.

You will win the next trick in hand and take the club finesse by running the 9. East will win the ♣K but will have no spade to play. You will make two tricks each in spades, hearts and diamonds plus three in clubs. Even if East had a spade to play, you would still have nine tricks so long as spades were originally 4-4.

The lesson from this deal is not to play automatically. You should form a plan of how to make your contract before deciding on how to play to the first trick.