

# STEP BY STEP DECLARER PLAY

BY NORBERT LÉBELY



# DON'T TEMPT FATE!



## DEALER SOUTH. N/S VUL.

Sitting South, you are the dealer and hold the following hand:

- ♠ K65
- ♥ QJ7
- ♦ AKQ
- ♣ 8754

You open 1NT and North raises to game:

W	N	E	S
			1NT
Pass	3NT		

West leads the 8 of Hearts...

	♠ 432 ♥ A3 ♦ 1098 ♣ AKQ63	
	N W                  E S	
	♠ K65 ♥ QJ7 ♦ AKQ ♣ 8754	

Contract: 3NT.  
Lead: ♥8.

### How many winners do you start with?

You have seven sure and immediate tricks: three Diamonds (Ace-King-Queen), three Clubs (Ace-King-Queen) and the Ace of Hearts. You are missing two, but Clubs should be able to provide them.

### Do you see a risk of going down?

Yes. If you are not careful, it may happen that you have to lose not only the King of Hearts but also four Spade tricks if East gets on lead and plays a Spade through your empty King.

### Do you have a convincing clue that helps you decide?

Yes. The ♥8 is not fourth best. The three missing higher cards are K109 and with K1098, West would have led the ♥10; top of the inner sequence. The 8 therefore comes from an honor-less suit.

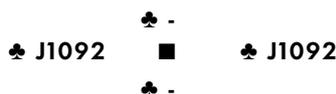
### What do you have to do?

Firmly call for the Ace of Hearts without tempting fate.

### What do the two additional Club tricks depend on?

On the Club break: 4-0, 2-2 or 3-1. Let's look at all that.

- If they are 0-4 or 4-0:



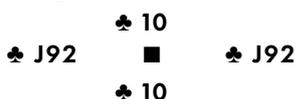
This case is the most unfavorable, since you will necessarily have to lose a trick after Ace-King-Queen of Clubs and suffer the disastrous consequences of this bad split.

- Clubs breaking 2-2:



Nothing bad can happen: after the outstanding Clubs fall on Ace-King, you play the 3 to your 7 and then overtake the 8 with the Queen and cash the high 6.

- A 3-1 (or 1-3) break however, which is the most frequent (50%), requires some caution:



Given that the Heart Ace was used up

on the first trick, it will be necessary to play the Clubs in an "autonomous" way. When both defenders follow to the Club Ace and you cash your King next, you mustn't overlook starting to unblock by playing the 7. When one of the defenders discards, you then unblock the 8 when you continue with the Queen. Dummy's 6 being higher than your 5, you can stay in dummy and enjoy the 3, the fifth Club trick. Operation unblock successful!

	♠ 432 ♥ A3 ♦ 1098 ♣ AKQ63	
♠ AJ108 ♥ 9864 ♦ 5432 ♣ 10	N W                  E S	♠ Q97 ♥ K1052 ♦ J76 ♣ J92
	♠ K65 ♥ QJ7 ♦ AKQ ♣ 8754	

## THE PRINCIPLE

Before making a decision, always think about the problems that can result from a "dangerous opponent". In these situations, a correct interpretation of the opening lead will be of great help to you. On the other hand, the successful untying of a possible blockage depends on:

- A meticulous analysis of the height of your (small and medium) cards facing each other.
- The visualization of the upcoming tricks in the suit in question.