# **Negative Double Practice Hands**

North	East	South	West
1♦	1 🛧	Dbl	Pass
2NT	Pass	3NT	Pass
Pass	Pass		
<ul> <li>₹ 7</li> <li>¥ K987</li> <li>₹ T9765</li> <li>₹ T4</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>▲ AK</li> <li>▲ A2</li> <li>▲ AQ</li> <li>▲ J76</li> <li>3</li> <li>3</li> <li>4</li> <li>T54</li> <li>Q6</li> <li>K3</li> <li>▲ A5</li> </ul>	6 84 53 43 53 2	<ul> <li>▲ QJ982</li> <li>♥ JT4</li> <li>◆ 2</li> <li>▲ KQ98</li> </ul>

## Board: 1 Dealer: North Lead: **A**Q

<u>Bidding:</u> Partner (North) treats my double as if East had passed and I had bid 1♥. Partner has no support for my hearts and bids with 18 points so rebids an invitational 2NT which I accept by bidding 3NT,

<u>Play:</u> We have eight top winners:  $\bigstar AK$ ,  $\forall A$ ,  $\blacklozenge AKQ$  and  $\bigstar A$ . We have possibilities for extra tricks in all suits other than diamonds.

The bidding and opening lead indicate that East started with  $\clubsuit$ QJ98x. We can therefore make certain of the contract by setting up dummy's  $\bigstar$ T.

We need to be careful with entries. After winning the opening lead with  $\clubsuit A$ , it's important to unblock dummy's  $\blacklozenge KJ$  at the next two tricks. Now we play a spade to  $\bigstar K$  and lead our remaining spade from hand.

East wins with  $\clubsuit$ J and switches to hearts, but we win with  $\clubsuit$ A and cash  $\blacklozenge$ AQ. Dummy's  $\clubsuit$ A and  $\bigstar$ T give us our eighth and ninth tricks.

South	West	North
1�	Dbl	Pass
Pass	4 🛧	Pass
Pass		
<ul> <li>▲ QJ9</li> <li>● 983</li> <li>◆ 63</li> <li>▲ J96</li> <li>4</li> <li>32</li> <li>7</li> <li>▲ 5</li> <li>♥ J6</li> <li>▲ AQ</li> <li>▲ QT</li> </ul>	96 75 5 J42 875	♠ A732 ♥ QT ♦ K5 ♣ AK432
	South 1 Pass Pass ♦ QJ9 ♦ 98 ♦ 98 ♦ 98 ♦ 98 ♦ 32 ↑ 32 ↑ 1 4 32 ↑ 5 ♥ J6 ♦ AQ ♣ QT	South       West         1       Dbl         Pass       4▲         Pass       98         • 0396       98         • 32       32         • 5       36         • 5       36         • 4       4         • 5       36         • 4       4

# Board: 2 Dealer: East Lead: ♥J

<u>Bidding:</u> I am East and partner's double shows 4+ of both majors. With a spade fit and 16 points I am strong enough to jump to  $2\clubsuit$ . With 10 points partner confidently bids  $4\clubsuit$ .

<u>Play:</u> The friendly lead of ♥J means we will now be able to make at least four heart tricks, to which may be added ♠AK and ♣AK for a total of eight top winners. There should be at least two extra trump tricks, which would give us our contract.

After winning the first trick with ♥Q, we draw two rounds of trumps, finding that North started with ♠QJ9x. This isn't a problem, however. We unblock ♥T, ruff a club in dummy and discard our ♦Kx on dummy's ♥AK. We ruff a diamond in hand.

There's still no rush to cash  $\clubsuit$ AK. We ruff another low club and ruff a second diamond in hand. We've run out of trumps in both hands, but can still cash  $\clubsuit$ A for our eleventh trick.

If North had started with a singleton diamond, this line of play would still give us 11 tricks.



# Board: 3 Dealer: South Lead: 🔶 A

<u>Bidding:</u> Partner (West) has promised 4 hearts and 8+ points. I have a great spade suit, well worth a jump to 3S, inviting partner to go to game if she has a little extra, but with a bare minimum 8 points and no ruffing values, partner declines the invitation.

<u>Play:</u> Our  $\checkmark$ A and seven trumps give us eight top winners. Barring a misdefence, we can't expect to make a trick with dummy's  $\blacklozenge$ Q, so we need to find an extra trick from hearts or clubs. There are three plausible approaches:

A. Hope that South has  $\forall K$  and finesse dummy's  $\forall Q$ .

B. Hope that North has  $\mathbf{A}Q$  and play a club from dummy to our  $\mathbf{A}J$ .

C. Hope that North has  $\mathbf{A}A$  and play a club from dummy to our  $\mathbf{A}K$ .

We don't have to decide yet. South wins the first two tricks with  $\blacklozenge$ AK and leads a third round for North to ruff. North returns a trump, which we win in hand.

We now have to make a decision, but before doing so we should remember the auction. South passed originally and has turned up with  $\diamond$ AKJ, so won't have as many as 12 points. It's just possible that he has  $\forall$ K in addition, but in that case North would have  $\clubsuit$ AQ, so any of the three approaches would be successful.

Even if we place  $\mathbf{V}$ K with North, there's still no room for  $\mathbf{A}$ A in South's hand, since he would then have 12 points. So we should conclude that North has  $\mathbf{A}$ A.

We might as well play a heart to  $\checkmark$ A and ruff a heart high, just in case  $\checkmark$ K appears, but when both opponents play low we should enter dummy with  $\bigstar$ T, drawing the last trump in the process. We now lead a club from dummy and play  $\bigstar$ K from hand. When this holds the trick we concede a club and claim the rest, making our contract exactly.



#### Board: 4 Dealer: West Lead: 46

<u>Bidding:</u> I am West, and after my opening  $1 \forall bid$  North makes a weak jump overcall of  $3 \blacklozenge$ . My partner's double shows 4 spades and 10+ points. I am a bit worried about my poor spades so I make a minimum ebid of  $3 \clubsuit$ , after which partner bids game.

<u>Play:</u> We clearly have to lose tricks to  $\clubsuit$ A and  $\blacklozenge$ A. North is likely to have the latter card so we shouldn't lose a second diamond trick, but we might have to lose a trick to  $\clubsuit$ J.

We win the opening lead with A and lead a spade, but North shows out. We play A from dummy and South ducks (best).

With South having all five missing trumps we're in some danger of losing a trick to South's long trumps as well as AJ. We can't afford to lead a second round of trumps, so we cash AK and J in hand before leading a diamond.

North wins with  $\blacklozenge$ A and returns a diamond. After winning in dummy we play off dummy's clubs. South follows twice and ruffs the last one (he's now down to just trumps left). We overruff and must make our tenth trick with one of our remaining trumps.



## Board: 5 Dealer: North Lead: +T

<u>Bidding:</u> I am North and open 1. Partner's double shows 8+ points and 4+ hearts. My jump to 3. would normally show 16 points but my 7<sup>th</sup> spade warrants the jump. Partner has an opening hand (would have opened 1NT) so bids game.

<u>Play:</u> Our seven trumps and two outside aces give us nine top winners. Leading towards ♥K might produce a tenth, but East's overcall makes it likely that he has ♥A. We do better to go after extra tricks in clubs, using the "loser or loser" technique.

We win the first trick in dummy, unblock  $\clubsuit$ A and enter dummy in spades. Now we make the key play of leading one of dummy's club honours and discarding our losing diamond. East wins with  $\clubsuit$ K and plays a diamond, which we ruff in hand.

We re-enter dummy in trumps and play off dummy's remaining top clubs, discarding hearts from hand. When nobody ruffs we finish with eleven tricks.

East	South	West	North		
1 🕭	2 🎚	Dbl	Pass		
2 🛧	3 🎍	3 🕭	Pass		
Pass	Pass				
🛧 J983					
🧡 K432					
🔶 K765					
	÷.	Ç			
🔶 QT			AK7542		
<b>9</b> 3987	'6		5		
🔶 AJ2		•	9843		
🔥 T82			KJ		
	ۍ 🖨	5			
	💗 /	AQT			
	🔶 (	QΤ			
A976543 🕵					

## Board: 6 Dealer: East Lead: A

<u>Bidding</u>: I am East and not interested in my partner's negative double showing hearts, so make a minimum rebid in my spade suit. When South rebids  $3\frac{4}{2}$  partner stretches to  $3\frac{4}{2}$ , which I pass.

<u>Play:</u> Even with favourable breaks we're most unlikely to make more than seven tricks in the black suits, with South sitting over my **&**KJ. We'll therefore need at least two tricks in diamonds if we are to make this contract.

North ruffs the second round of clubs and returns a heart to South's queen. South plays a third round of clubs, which North ruffs with  $\clubsuit$ 8. We have no useful discard, so we have to overruff with  $\bigstar$ K.

With South having seven clubs to North's one, South is most unlikely to have the three missing spades. We therefore play a spade to  $\clubsuit Q$  and draw the last trump with  $\bigstar A$ .

We now need three diamond tricks, which will be possible if South holds  $\bigstar$ KQx or doubleton  $\bigstar$ KT or  $\bigstar$ QT. We therefore lead  $\bigstar$ 3 towards dummy. When South plays  $\bigstar$ T we cover with West's  $\bigstar$ J, which North wins with  $\bigstar$ K. We ruff the heart return in hand.

If South started with  $\blacklozenge$ QTx the winning play would be to run  $\blacklozenge$ 9, but South would surely have played (second hand) low with that holding. We must stick to our original plan and play South for  $\diamondsuit$ QT doubleton. When we lead  $\blacklozenge$ 4 South has to play  $\diamondsuit$ Q, after which we can claim the rest. Nine tricks made.



# Board: 7 Dealer: South Lead: ♥K

<u>Bidding:</u> When partner (North) makes a negative double, promising 4 spades, I can count 18 HCP + two shortage points in my own hand so I bid  $4 \clubsuit$ .

<u>Play:</u> Our only top winners are  $\bigstar$ AKQJ and  $\forall$ A, but we can set up tricks in both minor suits by knocking out aces. After the opening lead we must lose a heart, so to make the contract we'll need to avoid losing any further tricks in the major suits.

If trumps are breaking 3-2 we can draw them all, after which there's enough time to knock out  $\blacklozenge$ A and  $\clubsuit$ A. Against a 4-1 trump break we'll need to delay drawing trumps until the aces are knocked out.

We win the first trick with ♥A and cash ♠A, but West shows out. After this unfavourable development we can't avoid losing a trump trick to East, so we must resign ourselves to going down. Our objective now is to avoid going more than one down.

There's more than one reasonable way to continue. Suppose that we decide to play on diamonds first. West wins with  $\blacklozenge$ A, cashes  $\blacktriangledown$ Q and continues with  $\clubsuit$ J, which we ruff in hand. We now play on diamonds until East ruffs.

In practice East ruffs the third round of diamonds and cashes  $\clubsuit A$ , on which it's important to unblock  $\clubsuit K$ . We win the trump switch in hand and draw another round of trumps. We overtake  $\clubsuit J$  with  $\bigstar Q$  and claim the rest with dummy's winners.

We might equally decide to lead  $\clubsuit$ K at trick 3. This time East wins and the defence play two rounds of hearts. We ruff in hand and play a diamond. West wins and plays a club. We cash  $\clubsuit$ KJ and play out diamonds until East ruffs. We can claim the rest with dummy's black suit winners.

# Board: 8 Dealer: West Lead: **A**K

<u>Bidding</u>: partner's negative double promises 4 hearts. I have 18 points and a heart fit so can add 3 shortage points for the singleton  $\clubsuit$ A. That's enough to go straight to game.

<u>Play:</u> Dummy's five trumps and our three side aces in hand give us eight top winners. We'll be able to make extra tricks by ruffing. Our combined  $\clubsuit$ QJ should also be worth a second trick in the suit.

Having escaped a diamond lead we don't have to worry about immediate losers. This means that the best way to set up our second club trick is to lead  $\clubsuit$ 5 from hand at trick 2.

North wins with  $\clubsuit$  and finds the best lead of a trump, but we win in hand and discard two of dummy's diamonds on  $\clubsuit$ AQ. We cash  $\blacklozenge$ A, ruff a diamond in dummy and ruff a spade in hand. We claim the rest on a high crossruff.

It would be a mistake to enter dummy in trumps to take the club finesse. North would win and play a second trump and we would finish with only eleven tricks.

