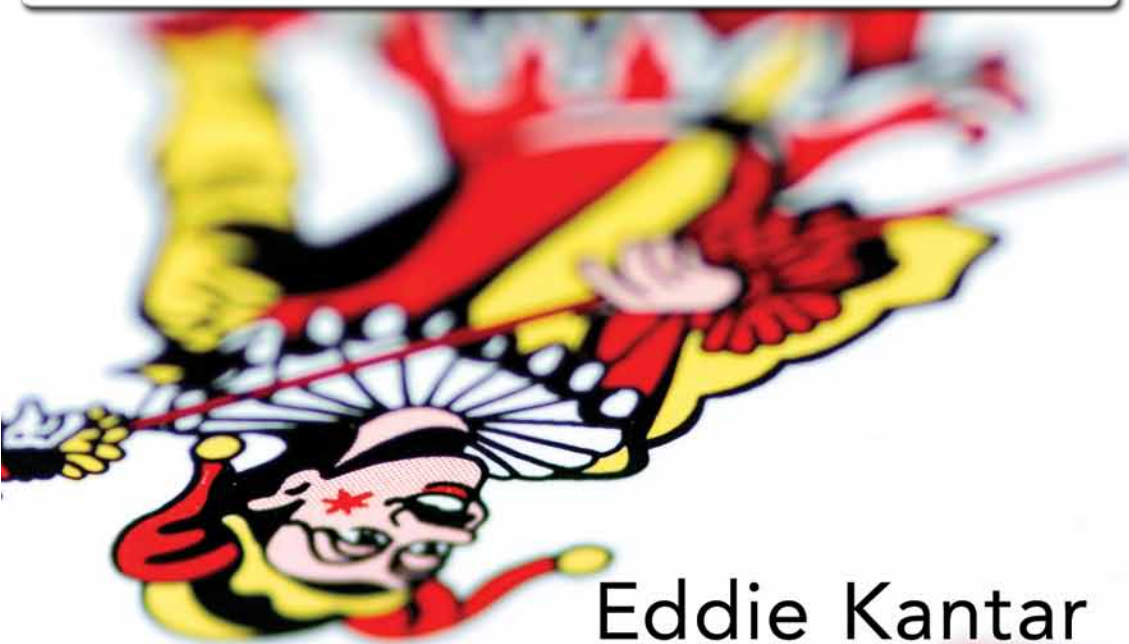


TAKE ALL YOUR
2 CHANCES
AT BRIDGE

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Eddie Kantar

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INTRODUCTION

When Ray Lee, my publisher, told me that *Take All Your Chances at Bridge* not only received very favorable reviews, but also won the Intermediate Book of the Year award from the ABTA (American Bridge Teachers Association), he suggested I do a sequel.

I jumped at the chance. I had hands that I just didn't have room for in the first book and now I could use them plus expand on the themes I had already used and add many more new ones. You could call this book a labor of love.

The format is the same as the first book, though I did try to include more partscore contracts. Even so, I'm sure I spoiled every reader who will be holding the South's cards in this book. We should all be so lucky.

All those who wrote to me and corrected the probability percentages in the first book should note that I prefer not to get involved with small fractions, given that they are pretty meaningless at the table. So when I state in this book that the probability of a 3-3 break is 36%, please read that as 'about 36%' — I know it's really 35.53%, but for these purposes, who cares?

In the first book the tougher hands are marked 'advanced' and no marking for the other hands. Naturally the inference is that the unmarked hands are not quite as tough. For the most part that is true, but do not get complacent when the hand has no marking. I'm tricky.

Nevertheless, we now have 'advanced' and 'advanced plus' ratings. Warning: Again, do not get overconfident if the hand has no rating. I'm still tricky!

Remember this is IMP scoring — concentrate on making your contract, and don't worry about overtricks.

Enjoy.

Eddie Kantar

♠ A K 5 2
 ♥ K Q J 9 8
 ♦ 6 4
 ♣ 9 2

 ♠ Q
 ♥ A
 ♦ 9 8 7 5
 ♣ A K J 10 8 7 4

You open 1♣ and jump to 3♣ after partner responds 1♥. Partner tries 3♠ and you convince yourself you have a diamond stopper and bid 3NT. West leads the ♠J. Plan the play.

You're going to like this one. Rather than putting all your eggs in the club basket, relying on seven club tricks without giving up the lead for fear of a diamond shift, win the first spade in dummy with the king and then play the ♠A, discarding the ♥A and liberating the ♥KQJ. That play ought to wake up the table.

Next cash the ♥KQJ. If the ♥10 drops (37%), you have nine tricks without needing the club suit to come in at all: five hearts, two clubs and two spades make nine. If the ♥10 doesn't oblige, play the ♣AK and hope the queen appears. Don't even think of taking the club finesse. The queen will drop a bit more than half the time. Combining the two plays gives you about a 70% chance of landing your contract. Nicely played.

The West hand: ♠ J 10 9 3 ♥ 7 5 4 2 ♦ A J 3 2 ♣ 5

The East hand: ♠ 8 7 6 4 ♥ 10 6 3 ♦ K Q 10 ♣ Q 6 3

Notice that if you win the opening lead in your hand and rely on the clubs to run, you will be disappointed. East will win the third club and shift to the ♦K and you will lose four diamonds and a club.

An alternate line of play that has merit but is not as good: win the ♠Q, cash the ♥A and the ♣A and get out with a diamond! As long as the opponents can only cash four diamond tricks (a bit more than 60% of the time), you are in reasonable shape. If West is on lead after the fourth diamond, you have the rest. If East is on lead and leads a low club, you have to decide whether to finesse or play for the drop — of course, if West has three to the queen, you're going down.

♠ K 8 6 4
 ♥ K 8 7
 ♦ 9 8
 ♣ K 10 3 2

 ♠ A Q 10 9 3 2
 ♥ 6 3 2
 ♦ K
 ♣ A Q 7

After you open 1♠, a simple limit-raise sequence lands you in 4♠. West leads the ♦Q. East wins the ace and returns the suit. Plan the play.

After trumping the diamond return and drawing trumps, you have a 100% play. Did you spot it? It illustrates a theme entitled the *safety play finesse*.

Cash the ♣AQ and lead a low club towards dummy's ♣K10. If West shows out, rise with the king and play the ♣10, giving up the lead to East as you discard a heart. What can East do? If East returns a heart, the most you can lose is one heart trick. If East returns a diamond, giving you a ruff and discard, you know what to do: discard a heart from your hand, the shorter heart hand, and ruff in dummy. With one heart remaining in your hand the most you can lose is one heart trick. You wind up losing a club, a diamond and a heart.

If West follows low to the third club, stick in the ten. If it wins, discard a heart on the ♣K and lead up to the ♥K for an overtrick. If the finesse loses to the ♣Jxx with East, East is faced with a choice of evils: leading a heart up to dummy's king or giving you a trick-costing ruff and discard. Keep in mind you still have the ♣K in dummy for a heart discard. You can't lose this hand regardless of who has the ♣J as long as you take a safety play finesse.

It should be noted that the best play in clubs for *four* tricks without a count on the suit is to play three top clubs and hope the jack drops. On a good day you can save a two-way suit like this until the bitter end. By that time you might have a count on the suit, know that West started with four clubs, and finesse the ten after cashing the ♣AQ.

The West hand: ♠ 5 ♥ Q 10 9 5 ♦ Q J 10 4 ♣ J 9 6 4

The East hand: ♠ J 7 ♥ A J 4 ♦ A 7 6 5 3 2 ♣ 8 5

♠ K Q 9 4 3
 ♥ A 5 4
 ♦ J 5
 ♣ 7 6 3

 ♠ A J 10 7 5
 ♥ K 6 3
 ♦ A 10
 ♣ A Q 2

You open 1♠ in fourth seat, West doubles, partner bids a conventional 2NT showing a limit raise in spades (3♠ would be preemptive) and you bid 4♠. West leads the ♦K and you notice partner has the death distribution: the exact same distribution as you have. There will be no trumping losers in the dummy and there will be no long suit establishment. What is to become of you? Plan the play.

You have four possible losers: one diamond, one heart and two clubs. Given West's passed-hand takeout double, the ♣K looks poorly placed to boot. Yet, you can overcome all of this. Win the ♦A, draw trumps, and play the ♥A, ♥K and a third heart. A worst-case scenario finds East winning the trick and ramming a high club through your ♣AQx. No problem. Win the ♣A and exit a diamond to West's queen. West either has to cash the ♣K, setting up your ♣Q for your tenth trick, or lead a red card allowing you to trump in one hand and discard a club from the other. Either way you only lose one club trick.

The West hand: ♠ 2 ♥ Q 8 7 2 ♦ K Q 9 7 ♣ K 9 5 4

The East hand: ♠ 8 6 ♥ J 10 9 ♦ 8 6 4 3 2 ♣ J 10 8

PROBLEM 9 (ADVANCED)
[TO SOLUTION](#)

♠ 9 7 6
 ♥ 4 3 2
 ♦ A J 6 2
 ♣ 9 5 4

 ♠ K 4
 ♥ A K Q J 8 7
 ♦ 10 3
 ♣ A K J

You open 2♣; partner responds 2♦, waiting, and after your 2♥ rebid partner bids 2NT, intending to support hearts later. An immediate raise to 3♥ would show a stronger hand, typically a hand that has a good chance of providing partner with at least two possible taking tricks. The jump raise to 4♥ shows the weakest raise of all, denying an ace, king, or a singleton. After partner's 2NT bid you resist the temptation of bidding 3NT and instead try 3♥. Partner raises to 4♥, the final contract.

West leads the ♦K. Plan the play.

PROBLEM 10 (ADVANCED)
[TO SOLUTION](#)

♠ J 6 4 3
 ♥ A 3 2
 ♦ Q J 3
 ♣ 10 4 2

 ♠ 7 5
 ♥ K Q J 8 7 5
 ♦ A 4
 ♣ A K 5

With both sides vulnerable, you open 1♥; West overcalls 2♦, partner bids 2♥, East passes and your 4♥ bid says it all. West starts with the ♠A, ♠K and a low spade, East playing the ♠10, ♠8 and then the ♠9 when you play low from dummy. You trump the third spade and play the ♥K, both opponents following small. Now what?

PROBLEM 11[TO SOLUTION](#)

♠ A 4 3
♥ A 6 5
♦ A Q 7 6 3 2
♣ 7

♠ K J 7 2
♥ 7 3 2
♦ 10
♣ A K Q 6 2

You open 1♣ and rebid 1♠ after partner responds 1♦. Partner tries a fourth-suit 2♥ bid and you bid 3♣. Now partner bids 3♠, a bid that leaves you in a quandary because you are not sure whether partner has three or four spades. You can't sit there forever so you bid 4♠. Besides, you can't see bidding 3NT when partner doesn't.

West leads the ♥Q, East encouraging with the ♥9. So here you are in a 4-3 fit, not always the end of the world — in fact, it could be your best contract! Anyway, playing a 4-3 trump fit builds character. Plan your character-building line of play.

PROBLEM 12 (ADVANCED)[TO SOLUTION](#)

♠ J 9
♥ K J 10 4 2
♦ 7 6 3
♣ K 8 4

♠ Q 7 5
♥ A Q 9 6 3
♦ K 4
♣ A J 10

You open 1NT and partner responds 2♦, a transfer to hearts. You bid 3♥ and partner bids 4♥. West leads the ♦Q, East wins the ace and returns the ♦5 to your king: one hurdle eliminated. How do you continue? Hearts are 2-1, West having the singleton.

♠ 9 7 6
 ♥ 4 3 2
 ♦ A J 6 2
 ♣ 9 5 4

 ♠ K 4
 ♥ A K Q J 8 7
 ♦ 10 3
 ♣ A K J

You open 2♣; partner responds 2♦, waiting, and after your 2♥ rebid partner bids 2NT, intending to support hearts later. You resist the temptation of bidding 3NT and instead try 3♥. Partner raises to 4♥, the final contract.

West leads the ♦K. Plan the play.

You have two possible spade losers, a possible club loser and a certain diamond loser. It appears, however, that you can work with the diamond suit to get rid of a black suit loser. Lacking a dummy entry, ducking the opening lead and planning to later finesse the jack and discard a loser on the ♦A looks like a good idea for a tenth trick. It's a good idea, a technique one usually does with a dummy that has no side-suit entry, but on this layout there is a better one, a much better one.

If you duck the first diamond and a diamond is returned, you will play the jack, of course, after which two bad things can happen. First, East can ruff the ♦J. Second, East may have started with a doubleton: then when you play the ♦A, East ruffs and now not only have you lost a diamond trick but there is no longer a dummy entry to try a black-suit finesse. You could be staring at three black-suit losers. What is to become of you?

The answer is to win the ♦A, draw trumps and lead the ♦10 to West's queen. Whichever suit West returns, including a diamond, gives you your tenth trick. As long as West has the ♦KQ and East has at least one diamond, you are a lock by winning the ♦A. Strangely, you don't need a side-suit entry to dummy after you win the ♦A because West will be forced to present you with your tenth trick after winning the ♦Q.

The West hand: ♠ A Q 10 ♥ 10 5 ♦ K Q 9 8 7 ♣ 10 7 6

The East hand: ♠ J 8 5 3 2 ♥ 9 6 ♦ 5 4 ♣ Q 8 3 2

♠ J 6 4 3
 ♥ A 3 2
 ♦ Q J 3
 ♣ 10 4 2

 ♠ 7 5
 ♥ K Q J 8 7 5
 ♦ A 4
 ♣ A K 5

With both sides vulnerable, you open 1♥; West overcalls 2♦, partner bids 2♥, East passes and your 4♥ bid says it all. West starts with the ♠A, ♠K and a low spade, East playing the ♠10, ♠8 and then the ♠9 when you play low from dummy. You trump the third spade and play the ♥K, both opponents following small. Now what?

The idea is to set up a diamond for a club discard. But there is a catch. After both opponents follow to the first heart, it is safe to cash a second high heart from your hand. If *East* shows out, play the ♦A and a diamond and use the ♥A to get to dummy's high diamond for a club discard. Play the same way if hearts are 2-2.

The 'catch' occurs when *West* shows out and East has three hearts. If you play ♦A and a diamond and West has a likely six-card diamond suit and East a doubleton, West wins the ♦K and leads a third diamond for East to ruff. You can overruff, but you are stuck with a club loser; down one.

The trick is to lead a *low* diamond (the key play) after the ♥KQ. West goes up with the ♦K, but can't give East a ruff because East still has another diamond. Whatever West returns, cash the ♦A, enter dummy with the ♥A, and pitch a club on a high diamond.

The West hand: ♠ A K 2 ♥ 4 ♦ K 10 9 7 6 2 ♣ Q 9 8

The East hand: ♠ Q 10 9 8 ♥ 10 9 6 ♦ 8 5 ♣ J 7 6 3

If East turns up with all four hearts, run your hearts, reducing to the ♦Ax and the ♣AKx, dummy having the ♦QJ and the ♣1042. Now play the ♣A, ♣K and another club. West will almost certainly be down to the ♦Kx and three clubs. If West has the ♣Q and fails to unblock or if West had the misfortune to be dealt both missing club honors, you lose only one more trick, the ♣10 turning out to be a big card.

♠ A 4 3
 ♥ A 6 5
 ♦ A Q 7 6 3 2
 ♣ 7

 ♠ K J 7 2
 ♥ 7 3 2
 ♦ 10
 ♣ A K Q 6 2

You open 1♣ and rebid 1♠ after partner responds 1♦. Partner tries a fourth-suit 2♥ bid and you bid 3♣. Now partner bids 3♠, a bid that leaves you in a quandary because you are not sure whether partner has three or four spades. You can't sit there forever so you bid 4♠. Besides, you can't see bidding 3NT when partner doesn't.

West leads the ♥Q, East encouraging with the ♥9. Plan your character-building line of play.

When looking at short suits in both hands plus a 'touchy' trump fit, think *crossruff*. When planning a crossruff, count your sure tricks just like at notrump. You have two spades, one heart, one diamond and three clubs for a total of seven. Not so terrible. Now count possible *ruffing* tricks: you need only three.

If you can cash three clubs safely (62%), allowing you to discard two hearts from dummy, you are looking pretty good. Win the ♥A, discard hearts on the top clubs and ruff a heart (ruffing trick #1). Next comes the ♦A and a diamond ruff (ruffing trick #2), and a second heart ruff in dummy (ruffing trick #3). Once East doesn't unblock a possible ♥Kx of hearts at Trick 1 and West hasn't overcalled 1♥, chances are excellent that hearts are 4-3.

Don't look now but you have taken the first eight tricks and a player of your caliber will surely be able to take at *least* two more with the ♠AKJ between the two hands. If the third club is ruffed, there are too many variations to go into. Suffice it to say you are better placed if West ruffs the third club as you can discard a heart.

There are other lines of play available, but none approach your chances of success with the recommended one. The basic idea is to recognize the hand as a possible crossruff (singletons in both hands), and be aware that at times a 4-3 fit can be the best trump fit of all!

The West hand: ♠ Q 9 6 5 ♥ Q J 10 ♦ 5 4 ♣ J 9 8 5

The East hand: ♠ 10 8 ♥ K 9 8 4 ♦ K J 9 8 ♣ 10 4 3

♠ J 9
 ♥ K J 10 4 2
 ♦ 7 6 3
 ♣ K 8 4

 ♠ Q 7 5
 ♥ A Q 9 6 3
 ♦ K 4
 ♣ A J 10

You open 1NT and partner responds 2♦, a transfer to hearts. You bid 3♥ and partner bids 4♥. West leads the ♦Q, East wins the ace and returns the ♦5 to your king: one hurdle eliminated. How do you continue? Hearts are 2-1, West having the singleton.

Start by drawing two rounds of trumps ending in dummy and trumping a diamond, stripping that suit. Your next play should be a low spade to the nine. If the nine drives out an honor, you will be able to establish the ♠Q for a club discard and your problems are over.

If the nine loses to the ten, the opponents have to play two more rounds of spades or else you have the rest. Say they do and you trump the third spade in dummy. Now you have to locate the ♣Q on your own.

If you have been able to get a count on the hand, play the opponent who started with the greater length in clubs for the queen. If you haven't, return to your hand with a trump and lead the ♣J, trying to coax a cover from West.

Tip

If West is a weak player and doesn't cover, play East for the ♣Q.

The West hand: ♠ A 8 6 2 ♥ 8 ♦ Q J 9 2 ♣ Q 7 6 5

The East hand: ♠ K 10 4 3 ♥ 7 5 ♦ A 10 8 5 ♣ 9 3 2

You have given yourself two chances and you have given the opponents a chance to err, the best you could do.

PROBLEM 13
[TO SOLUTION](#)

♠ Q 9 3
 ♥ Q J 9 3
 ♦ J 9 3
 ♣ Q 9 3

 ♠ A J 10 7 6 5 4
 ♥ A K
 ♦ A Q
 ♣ K 4

Accident coming up! You open 2♣, partner responds 2♦, waiting, and after you rebid 2♠, partner raises to 3♠. Your agreements are that a raise in this sequence shows a stronger hand than the one partner has. Among other things it should have *at least* one ace, or a king and either a queen or shortness, something that looks like it will produce a trick, not queens, jacks, nines and threes! In any case you bid 4NT, RKCB (1430) and partner responds 5♦, showing 0 keycards. You sign off in 5♠ knowing you are missing the ♣A and the ♠K. It has been said that the feeling one has after voluntarily arriving at contracts of 5♥, 5♠ and particularly 5NT is akin to that of kissing one's sister.

West leads the ♣J to East's ace and East returns a low diamond. Plan the play.

PROBLEM 14 (ADVANCED PLUS) [TO SOLUTION](#)

♠ 7 4 3
 ♥ A J 10
 ♦ K 9 6 5 4
 ♣ 10 2

 ♠ 9 8 5
 ♥ Q
 ♦ A J 3
 ♣ A K Q 9 8 7

Not vulnerable versus vulnerable, East, to your right, opens a third-seat 2♠, weak. You overcall 3♣, ending the bidding. West leads the ♠K, East overtakes, cashes two more spades, West pitching low hearts, and exits with a trump. You've lost three spades, but if clubs break 3-2 you have nine top tricks and would be playing for an overtrick. What if West has an unfriendly four clubs headed by the jack? Plan the play.

PROBLEM 15 (ADVANCED)
[TO SOLUTION](#)

♠ 8 5 3
 ♥ Q 8 2
 ♦ 9 4
 ♣ K J 10 9 8

 ♠ A Q 6
 ♥ A K J 10 5
 ♦ A 7 5 2
 ♣ A

This is a hand I played at my beloved Venice Beach — after paddle tennis, of course. I fell in love with all my controls and opened a pushy 2♣. When East doubled partner's 2♦ response, showing diamonds, I bid 2♥. Partner raised to 3♥, forward-going, and I leapt to 6♥ because I didn't want to give away my hand. Partner, my wife Yvonne, will not be impressed with that lame excuse if I go down. How would you play this slam with the ♦J lead, East overtaking? Oh yes, you are vulnerable and they are not. More matrimonial pressure!

PROBLEM 16 (ADVANCED)
[TO SOLUTION](#)

♠ K J 5 2
 ♥ 5 4 2
 ♦ K 9 4
 ♣ K 5 2

 ♠ A 10 7 4 3
 ♥ Q J 3
 ♦ A
 ♣ A J 6 4

Vulnerable against not, you open fourth seat with 1♠. West passes and partner bids 2♣, *Drury*, a passed-hand artificial response to a major-suit opening bid. The bid describes a hand with at least three-card trump support along with 10-11 support points. It caters to a light opening in third (or fourth) seat and allows for the possibility of getting out at the two-level. After a *Drury* 2♣ response, a rebid of two of the original major announces to partner (and the opponents) that you were kidding about your opening bid. This time you weren't kidding and bid 4♠, the end.

West leads the ♥10. East wins the ♥K and ♥A and leads a third heart, West following with the ♥7 and ♥9. Plan the play.

♠ Q 9 3
 ♥ Q J 9 3
 ♦ J 9 3
 ♣ Q 9 3

 ♠ A J 10 7 6 5 4
 ♥ A K
 ♦ A Q
 ♣ K 4

You open 2♣, partner responds 2♦, waiting, and after you rebid 2♠, partner raises to 3♠. You bid 4NT, RKCB (1430) and partner responds 5♦, showing 0 keycards. You sign off in 5♠ knowing you are missing the ♣A and the ♠K. West leads the ♣J to East's ace and East returns a low diamond. Plan the play.

Did you take the diamond finesse hoping it would work (50%) and if it didn't, hope the ♠K would drop singleton (26%)? Or did you unblock the ♣K at Trick 1 so you could win the ♦A and lead a club to the nine, discarding your losing ♦Q, and then take the spade finesse for an overtrick?

The ♣10 is marked in the West hand: holding the ♣A10, East would not have played the ace at Trick 1. Why? Because East knows that you are missing two keycards so his partner must have an entry. In other words, East knows he is not going to lose the ♣A and has a good chance of taking two club tricks if he plays low at Trick 1. For those two reasons, when East does play the ♣A at Trick 1 he doesn't have the ♣10. Therefore dumping the ♣K at Trick 1, winning the ♦A at Trick 2 and finessing the ♣9 at Trick 3 stands out like a sore thumb.

The West hand: ♠ K 8 ♥ 10 6 4 2 ♦ K 8 6 ♣ J 10 8 7

The East hand: ♠ 2 ♥ 8 7 5 ♦ 10 7 5 4 2 ♣ A 6 5 2

Tip: _____

When the opponents stop at five of a major after a Blackwood sequence, assume two keycards are missing and defend accordingly.

SOLUTION 14 (ADVANCED PLUS) [TO PROBLEM](#)

♠ 7 4 3
 ♥ A J 10
 ♦ K 9 6 5 4
 ♣ 10 2

 ♠ 9 8 5
 ♥ Q
 ♦ A J 3
 ♣ A K Q 9 8 7

Not vulnerable versus vulnerable, East, to your right, opens a third-seat 2♠, weak. You overcall 3♣, ending the bidding. West leads the ♠K, East overtakes, cashes two more spades, West pitching low hearts, and exits with a trump. You've lost three spades, but if clubs break 3-2 you have nine top tricks and would be playing for an overtrick. What if West has an unfriendly four clubs headed by the jack? Plan the play.

This hand illustrates an unusual technique that avoids dealing with the missing red-suit honors in case you have a club loser.

Win the club return, cross to the ♥A (the key play), and now play a second high club. If both follow, you are playing for an overtrick. If East shows out on the second club, as feared, cash a third high club, discarding a diamond, and then a fourth club, throwing West in and discarding another diamond.

West has to lead a red card. A diamond eliminates the loser in that suit and a heart return, regardless of who has the king, sets up a heart winner for a diamond discard.

If you neglect to cross to the ♥A at Trick 5 and test clubs instead, you no longer have a 100% play for your contract.

The West hand: ♠ K ♥ 9 7 6 5 3 ♦ Q 10 2 ♣ J 6 5 3

The East hand: ♠ A Q J 10 6 2 ♥ K 8 4 2 ♦ 8 7 ♣ 4

Many would open the East hand with 1♠, not wanting to open 2♠ with four hearts or with a hand quite that strong. Keep in mind that West is a passed hand. Also, when the long suit is independent (can play easily facing a singleton) it normally doesn't matter if you miss a 4-4 fit. In fact, a 6-1 or a 6-2 fit, with long suit independent, frequently plays better than a 4-4 fit.

♠ 8 5 3
 ♥ Q 8 2
 ♦ 9 4
 ♣ K J 10 9 8

 ♠ A Q 6
 ♥ A K J 10 5
 ♦ A 7 5 2
 ♣ A

I fell in love with all my controls and opened a pushy 2♣. When East doubled partner's 2♦ response, showing diamonds, I bid 2♥. Partner raised to 3♥, forward-going, and I leapt to 6♥ because I didn't want to give away my hand. How would you play this slam with the ♦J lead, East overtaking?

For openers, grab the ♦A. There is a strong chance that the lead is a singleton. Next, instead of trying to set up clubs, an inferior line that requires far too many good things happening, why not make life easy for yourself and work with diamonds? The bidding plus dummy's ♥8 indicates that it will be easy to ruff two diamonds in dummy, discard a spade on the ♣K and eventually take the spade finesse. I cashed the ♣A at Trick 2 and conceded a diamond at Trick 3, West discarding a low spade.

As expected, East shifted to a spade, the jack to be precise. I needed the finesse to work so I took it and it worked. Of course it worked, finesses always work when I play a hand in my books! West followed with another low spade.

Next, I cashed the ♠A as I did not want West to discard another spade when I ruffed a diamond. I was pretty sure that West had a third spade. If West had a doubleton small spade, then East started with the ♠KJ109x along with ♦KQ108xx and didn't bid again. I couldn't believe it. Cashing the ♠A also guards against 5-0 hearts. Check it out.

I ruffed a second diamond low, discarded a spade on the ♣K, and was left with the ♥Q in dummy along with some black junk and the ♥AKJ105 in my hand. I was able to handle taking the last five tricks. Incidentally, it does not help for West to uppercut the dummy each time I ruff a diamond. I still take the same number of tricks.

P.S. If you want finesses to work for you, write a book!

The West hand: ♠ 9 7 4 2 ♥ 9 7 6 4 ♦ J ♣ Q 6 5 2

The East hand: ♠ K J 10 ♥ 3 ♦ K Q 10 8 6 3 ♣ 7 4 3

♠ K J 5 2
 ♥ 5 4 2
 ♦ K 9 4
 ♣ K 5 2

 ♠ A 10 7 4 3
 ♥ Q J 3
 ♦ A
 ♣ A J 6 4

Vulnerable against not, you open fourth seat with 1♠. After a Drury 2♣ response, you bid 4♠, the end. West leads the ♥10. East wins the ♥K and ♥A and leads a third heart, West following with the ♥7 and ♥9. Plan the play.

The idea is to avoid two black-suit losers if the ♣Q is offside and you don't get the spades right. You can do it! Here's how: cash the ♦A, cross to the ♠K, discard a club on the ♦K and ruff a diamond. Now that the red suits have been stripped from both your hand and dummy, cross to the ♣K and lead a second spade.

If the queen appears, win the ace (nice play), cross back to a spade and take the club finesse for an overtrick. If East follows low, stick in the ♠10. If it loses, West has no safe exit and your possible club loser vanishes. If East shows out, go up with the ace and exit a spade to West again, leaving him with no answer.

'Eight ever, nine never', aside from being a nice rhyme, applies when declarer has a nine-card fit missing the queen with no clue as to the distribution and no need to finesse into one hand or another as an avoidance play. This hand is an example of an 'avoidance finesse'. If it works, great, and if it loses, the player winning the trick has to give you a trick in return.

The West hand: ♠ 8 ♥ 10 9 8 7 ♦ Q 8 7 6 2 ♣ Q 10 8

The East hand: ♠ Q 9 6 ♥ A K 6 ♦ J 10 5 3 ♣ 9 7 3

PROBLEM 17
[TO SOLUTION](#)

♠ 9 2
 ♥ Q J 5
 ♦ A K Q 6
 ♣ J 9 4 3

 ♠ A K Q J 10
 ♥ A 6 2
 ♦ J
 ♣ A 10 8 7

Partner opens 1♦, you respond 1♠, and after partner rebids 1NT, you jump to 3♣, which you play as forcing. Partner rebids 3NT and you throw caution to the wind and leap to 6♠. West leads the ♥10. Plan the play.

PROBLEM 18 (ADVANCED)
[TO SOLUTION](#)

♠ 5 3
 ♥ 7 6
 ♦ K Q J 10 6
 ♣ A 6 4 2

 ♠ Q 7 6 4
 ♥ A K J 10 9 5 4
 ♦ A
 ♣ 3

West opens 1♣, partner overcalls 1♦ and you bid 4♥, hoping you are not missing anything. West leads the ♣K and when dummy comes down thoughts of 'missing anything' quickly vanish. You could be in trouble in 4♥! Plan the play.

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