

BRIDGE TECHNIQUE SERIES

PLANNING THE PLAY IN NOTRUMP



David Bird • Marc Smith

MASTER POINT PRESS • TORONTO

Bridge Technique Series

Entry Management

Tricks with Trumps

Safety Plays

Eliminations and Throw-Ins

Deceptive Card Play

Planning in Suit Contracts

Planning in Notrump Contracts

Defensive Signaling

Squeezes Made Simple

Planning in Defense

Reading the Cards

Tricks with Finesses

Copyright © 2001 David Bird & Marc Smith

All rights reserved. It is illegal to reproduce any portion of this material except by special arrangement with the publisher. Reproduction of this material without authorization, by any duplication process whatsoever, is a violation of copyright.

Master Point Press

331 Douglas Ave
Toronto, Ontario, Canada
M5M 1H2
(416) 781-0351

Internet: www.masterpointpress.com
www.masteringbridge.com
www.bridgeblogging.com
www.ebooksbridge.com

Email: info@masterpointpress.com

Canadian Cataloguing in Publication Data

Bird, David, 1946-
Planning the play in notrump

(Bridge technique; 7)
ISBN 978-1-55494-007-3

1. Contract bridge — dummy play. I. Smith, Marc, 1960- II Title.
III. Series: Bird, David, 1946-. Bridge technique; 7

GV1282.3 B5718 2001 795.41'.53 C00-933111-5

Cover design and Interior: Olena S. Sullivan
Editor: Ray Lee

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

07 06 05 04 03 02 01

CONTENTS

Chapter 1 How to Plan a Notrump Contract	5
<i>Quiz</i>	7
Chapter 2 The Hold-up and Subsequent Play	9
<i>The hold-up with one stopper</i>	9
<i>The hold-up with one and half stoppers</i>	13
<i>The hold-up with two stoppers</i>	15
<i>Key points</i>	17
<i>Quiz</i>	19
Chapter 3 Which Suit Should I Attack?	21
<i>Knocking out the entry to the danger hand</i>	21
<i>Reading the opening lead</i>	24
<i>Which is the better chance?</i>	25
<i>Leading through a defender's honor</i>	27
<i>Key points</i>	28
<i>Quiz</i>	29
Chapter 4 Combining Chances	31
<i>Combining two fitnesses</i>	35
<i>Avoiding a premature guess</i>	36
<i>Key points</i>	38
<i>Quiz</i>	39
Chapter 5 Communications Play	41
<i>Scoring all your winners</i>	43
<i>Winning with a higher card than is necessary</i>	45
<i>Winning the opening lead in the right hand</i>	46
<i>Key points</i>	49
<i>Quiz</i>	50
Chapter 6 Running the Long Suit	53
<i>Exerting genuine pressure</i>	54
<i>Key points</i>	58
<i>Quiz</i>	59

How to Plan a Notrump Contract

You reach 3NT, the opening lead is made, and with a nervous look across the table partner lays down the dummy. What next? Before playing a card from the dummy, you should make a general plan for the contract. The first step is to count how many top tricks you have. You must then determine the safest way to establish the extra tricks you need. Let's see an example straight away.

♠ Q 10 8 2	♠ K 9 3										
♥ J 8 3	♥ A Q 5										
♦ K 9 6	♦ J 10 4										
♣ 9 5 2	♣ Q 7 6 3										
	<table border="1" style="border-collapse: collapse; width: 40px; height: 40px; margin: auto;"> <tr> <td style="padding: 2px;"></td> <td style="padding: 2px; text-align: center;">N</td> <td style="padding: 2px;"></td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 2px; text-align: center;">W</td> <td style="padding: 2px;"></td> <td style="padding: 2px; text-align: center;">E</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 2px;"></td> <td style="padding: 2px; text-align: center;">S</td> <td style="padding: 2px;"></td> </tr> </table>		N		W		E		S		
	N										
W		E									
	S										
	♠ A 6	♠ J 7 5 4									
	♥ 9 7 4	♥ K 10 6 2									
	♦ Q 8 2	♦ A 7 5 3									
	♣ A K J 10 4	♣ 8									

West leads a fourth-best ♠2 against 3NT. You can count eight top tricks: two spades, one heart, no diamonds and five clubs. A successful heart finesse would give you a ninth trick. If the finesse lost, though, the defenders would clear the spade suit and you would surely go down. How about establishing a ninth trick in diamonds? West's ♠2 lead indicates that the spades are 4-4. By knocking out the ace and king of dia-

monds, you will set up a ninth trick for yourself, at the same time restricting the defenders to just two spades and two top diamonds.

Is the line 100% (assuming spades are 4-4)? Not quite. Suppose West held both missing diamond honors and East held the ♥ K. West could win the first diamond and switch to hearts. You would rise with dummy's ace of hearts and play a second diamond. This is better than finessing, because if East wins the second diamond trick, he cannot hurt you in hearts. However, West could win the next diamond and lead a heart through the queen to beat you. But this would need three cards to be wrong — both diamonds and the ♥ K. If the contract went down on this line, a simple heart finesse would have failed too.

That is our plan for the contract, then — we will play on diamonds. If West wins the first round of diamonds and switches to a heart, we will rise with dummy's ace. Dummy's remaining ♥ Q5 will then act as a stopper if East holds the other diamond honor.

On the next deal, try making a plan yourself.

♠ 10 6 2	♠ A 9 4 3	♠ Q J 7 5									
♥ Q 9 7 6 2	♥ K 5	♥ 10 8 4 3									
♦ K 4	♦ 10 8	♦ A 5 3									
♣ K J 4	♣ A Q 10 8 7	♣ 6 5									
	<table border="1" style="border-collapse: collapse; width: 60px; height: 60px; margin: auto;"> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">N</td><td></td><td style="text-align: center;">E</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">W</td><td></td><td></td></tr> <tr><td></td><td style="text-align: center;">S</td><td></td></tr> </table>	N		E	W				S		
N		E									
W											
	S										
	♠ K 8										
	♥ A J										
	♦ Q J 9 7 6 2										
	♣ 9 3 2										

West leads the ♥ 6 against 3NT. Plan the play.

You have only five tricks on top. The diamond suit can provide four more, once you have knocked out the ace and king. Unfortunately, you will not have time to do that. The defenders will clear the heart suit when you knock out their first diamond stopper, then cash at least three hearts when you knock out the second stopper. The only other possibility is to play on clubs, hoping to score five tricks in the suit. You will need West to hold both the missing honors. Only a 24% chance, yes, but better than the near-zero chance of playing on diamonds.