

# Bridge for Beginners: Lavings Special#3.

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# Defence strategies.

This is the third lesson on strategies for declarer play.

Before we do go into those hands, we will have a brief discussion about defensive strategies – how to prevent declarer from making thier contract.

The lessons originated with Paul Lavings of [bridgegear.com.au](http://bridgegear.com.au), and have been subjected to minor alterations by Ross Frick.

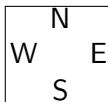
# Board#11.

Dealer is South,  
E-W vulnerable.

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

	11	
8	HCP	7
	14	

♠ 7 6  
♥ A 10 8 6  
♦ A Q J 3  
♣ 9 8 4



♠ K 8  
♥ K Q J 7 5 2  
♦ K 4  
♣ Q 10 2

S	W	N	E
1♥	Pass	3♦*	Pass
Pass	4♥	All	pass
♠ A 9 5 4 2	♥ 4	♦ 10 8 6 2	♣ K 7 5

The 3♦ by North is a conventional bid, agreeing ♥s, promising enough for game with ♦s stopped, and inviting slam from partner. South bids the game. You are East. Partner leads ♠Q.

# Board#11.

Dealer is South,  
E-W vulnerable.

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

11
8 HCP 7
14

♠ 7 6  
♥ A 10 8 6  
♦ A Q J 3  
♣ 9 8 4

	N	
W		E
	S	

♠ K 8  
♥ K Q J 7 5 2  
♦ K 4  
♣ Q 10 2

S	W	N	E
1♥	Pass	3♦*	Pass
Pass	4♥	All	pass
♠ A 9 5 4 2	♥ 4	♦ 10 8 6 2	♣ K 7 5

You win with the ♠A in case declarer's marked ♠K is a singleton  
(and they get a free trick).

You look at dummy. Dummy's weakness is in ♣s.

# Board#11.

Dealer is South,  
E-W vulnerable.

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

11		
8	HCP	7
14		

♠ 7 6  
♥ A 10 8 6  
♦ A Q J 3  
♣ 9 8 4

	N	
W		E
	S	

♠ K 8  
♥ K Q J 7 5 2  
♦ K 4  
♣ Q 10 2

S	W	N	E
1♥	Pass	3♦*	Pass
Pass	4♥	All	pass
♠ A 9 5 4 2	♥ 4	♦ 10 8 6 2	♣ K 7 5

You need three ♣ tricks to beat the contract, so you switch to the ♣5. Partner wins with the ♣J over the ♣10 and you make two more ♣ tricks for one down.

# Board#12.

Dealer is West,  
All vulnerable.

♠ J 10 6 2  
♥ A 5  
♦ Q J 8 6  
♣ 10 6 5

	3	
8	HCP	18
	11	

♠ 8 3  
♥ K 8 3  
♦ 9 7 3 2  
♣ 9 8 4 2



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

E	S	W	N
1♥	1♠	1NT	Pass
3NT	Pass	Pass	Pass

♠ 9 4  
♥ Q J 10 9 2  
♦ A K 5  
♣ A K J

You are South, and partner leads the ♠8 (your suit). Since West has bid 1NT, and the ♠8 is likely the top of partner's ♠ suit, you can guess West's holding in ♠s.

# Board#12.

Dealer is West,  
All vulnerable.

♠ J 10 6 2  
♥ A 5  
♦ Q J 8 6  
♣ 10 6 5

3
8 HCP 18
11

♠ 8 3  
♥ K 8 3  
♦ 9 7 3 2  
♣ 9 8 4 2

	N	
W		E
	S	

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

E	S	W	N
1♥	1♠	1NT	Pass
3NT	Pass	Pass	Pass

♠ 9 4			
♥ Q J 10 9 2			
♦ A K 5			
♣ A K J			

It is very easy to make an early mistake here and win trick one with the ♠Q and clear the ♠s. When partner wins with their ♥K they have no more ♠s to play and 3NT makes.

# Board#12.

Dealer is West,  
All vulnerable.

♠ J 10 6 2  
♥ A 5  
♦ Q J 8 6  
♣ 10 6 5

3		
8	HCP	18
11		

♠ 8 3  
♥ K 8 3  
♦ 9 7 3 2  
♣ 9 8 4 2

N		
W		E
S		

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

E	S	W	N
1♥	1♠	1NT	Pass
3NT	Pass	Pass	Pass

♠ 9 4  
♥ Q J 10 9 2  
♦ A K 5  
♣ A K J

To beat 3NT, South must duck at trick one. Play the ♠5 to encourage a continuation. Now when partner wins the ♥K they can play another ♠.



# More on declarer play.

In the next three hands we discuss declarer play.

As you will see, the first two are all about no-trumps, the last is a suit contract.

# Board#13.

Dealer is South,  
E-W vulnerable.

♠ 10 6 5  
♥ K J 9 5 3  
♦ K 8 6  
♣ 6 2

13		
7	HCP	5
15		

♠ Q 8 4  
♥ A 8 2  
♦ J 10 4  
♣ A Q 10 4

N		
W		E
S		

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

S	W	N	E
1NT	Pass	3NT	End

♠ 9 3 2  
♥ Q 7 4  
♦ 7 3 2  
♣ K 8 7 3

West leads ♥5 (fourth highest from longest and strongest suit)  
and declarer counts seven top tricks:  
Four ♠s, the ♥A, the ♦A, the ♣A.

# Board#13.

Dealer is South,  
E-W vulnerable.

♠ 10 6 5  
♥ K J 9 5 3  
♦ K 8 6  
♣ 6 2

13		
7	HCP	5
15		

♠ Q 8 4  
♥ A 8 2  
♦ J 10 4  
♣ A Q 10 4

	N	
W		E
	S	

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

S	W	N	E
1NT	Pass	3NT	End

♠ 9 3 2  
♥ Q 7 4  
♦ 7 3 2  
♣ K 8 7 3

The first step is to hold up the ♥s in case they break 5-3. Declarer wins the third ♥ and has a choice of either the ♦ or ♣ finesse to make the contract.

# Board#13.

Dealer is South,  
E-W vulnerable.

♠ 10 6 5  
♥ K J 9 5 3  
♦ K 8 6  
♣ 6 2

13		
7	HCP	5
15		

♠ Q 8 4  
♥ A 8 2  
♦ J 10 4  
♣ A Q 10 4

N		
W		E
S		

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

S	W	N	E
1NT	Pass	3NT	End

♠ 9 3 2  
♥ Q 7 4  
♦ 7 3 2  
♣ K 8 7 3

East is the safe hand, so declarer crosses to the ♠K and leads ♣9. When this loses to the ♣K East has no more hearts to return and declarer has nine top tricks. Bravo!

# Board#14.

Dealer is West,  
All vulnerable.

♠ K 7 5  
♥ K 10 7  
♦ Q 5 4  
♣ A K 6 2

6
15 HCP 9
10

♠ Q 10 9 4 3  
♥ Q 6 5  
♦ 8 7  
♣ Q 8 3

	N	
W		E
	S	

♠ A J 6  
♥ J 9 8 2  
♦ K 9 2  
♣ J 9 5

W	N	E	S
1NT	Pass	3NT	End

♠ 8 2  
♥ A 4 3  
♦ A J 10 6 3  
♣ 10 7 4

North leads ♠4 (fourth highest from longest and strongest suit) and declarer counts only five top tricks. South wins with the ♠A and returns the ♠J — the critical point in the hand has arrived.

# Board#14.

Dealer is West,  
All vulnerable.

♠ K 7 5  
♥ K 10 7  
♦ Q 5 4  
♣ A K 6 2

	6	
15	HCP	9
	10	

♠ Q 10 9 4 3  
♥ Q 6 5  
♦ 8 7  
♣ Q 8 3

	N	
W		E
	S	

♠ A J 6  
♥ J 9 8 2  
♦ K 9 2  
♣ J 9 5

W	N	E	S
1NT	Pass	3NT	End

♠ 8 2  
♥ A 4 3  
♦ A J 10 6 3  
♣ 10 7 4

West must hold up the ♠K until the third round, breaking the defenders' communication. Now when declarer finesses the ♦ (♦Q to the ♦A,J,10,6,3, losing to South's ♦K) South has no more ♠s to return and declarer makes nine tricks.

# Board#14a: But ...

Dealer is West,  
All vulnerable.

♠ Q 10 9 4 3  
♥ J 6  
♦ K 8 7 2  
♣ 8 3

W	N	E	S
1NT	Pass	3NT	End

♠ K 7 5  
♥ K 10 7  
♦ Q 5 4  
♣ A K 6 2



♠ 8 2  
♥ A 4 3  
♦ A J 10 6 3  
♣ 10 7 4

6
15 HCP 9
10

♠ A J 6  
♥ Q 9 8 5 2  
♦ 9  
♣ Q J 9 5

That finesse fails if there are four ♦s to the ♦K in the North hand.  
The correct ♦ play is low to the ♦10 first, and if that wins, return with a ♣ to the ♣A to repeat the finesse by leading the ♦Q.

# Board#15.

Dealer is North,  
All vulnerable.

♠ K Q 6 3  
♥ 8 6 2  
♦ A Q 7  
♣ 9 7 2

18		
11	HCP	5
6		

♠ A 4  
♥ A K J 10 9  
♦ J 9 4  
♣

	N	
W		E
	S	

♠ 9 8 7 5 2  
♥ Q 7 5  
♦ 8 3  
♣ A 8 6

W	N	E	S
1 ♥	Pass	2 ♥	Pass
4 ♥	Pass	Pass	Pass
♠ J 10			
♥ 4 3			
♦ K 10 6 5 2			
♣ J 10 5 4			

Against suit contracts defenders should avoid leading from high honours unless it is a sequence, so East selects ♠J (likely top of partner's best suit). Declarer counts one ♠ and three ♦ losers.



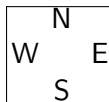
# Board#15.

Dealer is North,  
All vulnerable.

♠ K Q 6 3  
♥ 8 6 2  
♦ A Q 7  
♣ 9 7 2

	18	
11	HCP	5
	6	

♠ A 4  
♥ A K J 10 9  
♦ J 9 4  
♣



♠ 9 8 7 5 2  
♥ Q 7 5  
♦ 8 3  
♣ A 8 6

W	N	E	S
1♥	Pass	2♥	Pass
4♥	Pass	Pass	Pass
♠ J 10			
♥ 4 3			
♦ K 10 6 5 2			
♣ J 10 5 4			

With no chance of a discard declarer should play on diamonds intending to ruff the third ♦ in dummy. Defenders do best to play on trumps now.

# Board#15.

Dealer is North,  
All vulnerable.

♠ K Q 6 3  
♥ 8 6 2  
♦ A Q 7  
♣ 9 7 2

	18	
11	HCP	5
	6	

♠ A 4  
♥ A K J 10 9  
♦ J 9 4  
♣

	N	
W		E
	S	

♠ 9 8 7 5 2  
♥ Q 7 5  
♦ 8 3  
♣ A 8 6

W	N	E	S
1♥	Pass	2♥	Pass
4♥	Pass	Pass	Pass
♠ J 10			
♥ 4 3			
♦ K 10 6 5 2			
♣ J 10 5 4			

But declarer wins the trump and plays the second ♦, and can still trump their third ♦ in dummy to reduce their losers to three and make their contract. (East should have led a trump at trick#1?)