

## **TRAVIS-T(ip) #2**

By Barbara Travis

### **MAKE BETTER USE OF YOUR ENTRIES**

Many declarer play errors occur because we forget to make a plan for the hand.

That plan should include

- Counting your winners (in a NT contract) or identifying losers (in a suit contract)
  - *Working out whether you need to trump some losers (in dummy) – Tip 1 January 2015*
  - Working out whether you need to finesse and, if so, how many entries you need for your finesses
  - Working out whether you need to create extra winners and, if so, which suit you will utilise and whether you need to think about entries to the hand with that long suit
- 
- If you plan to use dummy's long suit, then you need to keep entries to dummy.
  - If you plan to use your long suit, then you need to keep entries to your hand.
  - You may need to defer leading trumps if your trump suit is your source of entries.
  - If the opening lead is removing an important entry immediately, you may need to make use of that entry before leading trumps.
  - When one hand is very strong and the other is very weak, thinking about entries is critical.

Let's look at some examples:

<b>DUMMY</b>	<b>DECLARER</b>
<b>765</b>	<b>AQ</b>
<b>K32</b>	<b>AQJ10987</b>
<b>A432</b>	<b>76</b>
<b>987</b>	<b>K6</b>

You are playing in 4H and receive the lead of DK. Remember to plan.

1. One of your entries to dummy is being removed by the lead. How many entries will you need (plan)?
2. Possible losers: 1 diamond (always), 1 spade (finesse), 1-2 clubs (depending on finesse for CA). That means you need TWO finesses – SK and CA = 2 entries.
3. There are two entries to dummy but one is being used at trick 1. So make sure you make use of that entry which means deferring leading trumps:
4. Take the spade finesse – if it works, you can draw trumps ending in dummy and try for CA onside for 11 tricks – but it fails.
5. Leader wins SK, cashes DQ and tries DJ which you trump. Count HCP – SK, DK, DQ, DJ... with the CA they would have made a takeout double (or overcall).
6. Now you draw trumps but ending in dummy so you can lead a club towards your CK to make your contract.

<b>DUMMY</b>	<b>DECLARER</b>
<b>93</b>	<b>A1054</b>
<b>1054</b>	<b>AJ76</b>
<b>J10987</b>	<b>AK</b>
<b>KJ4</b>	<b>AQ5</b>

You are playing in 3NT on a club lead. Remember to plan.

1. Count your winners: 1 spade, 1 heart, 2 diamonds, 3 clubs = 7. Extra tricks should come from the diamond suit.
2. To make the diamonds into winners will involve 3 steps: cash DA and DK, then go to dummy to remove the DQ (assuming it hasn't come down), and then be able to go back to dummy to cash the diamonds = you need 2 entries, which are the CK and CJ.
3. That means you need to win trick 1 with the CA – to keep both the entries alive (if you win the CQ you only have an entry with the CK).
4. Now you win the CA, cash DA and DK, go to dummy to lead the DJ etc.

DUMMY	DECLARER
J1054	AKQ32
K54	32
Q32	KJ7
654	AQJ

You are playing in 4S on the lead of HQ through the HK. HQ, HJ and another heart and you trump.

1. You have lost 2 hearts and will always lose the DA. That means you need the CK inside (finesse).
2. That means you need TWO entries for 2 finesses. There's no guarantee that DQ is an entry (and clever defenders will make sure it isn't). That means that you need SJ and S10 as entries.
3. You should trump HIGH when you trumped the heart, to keep the 2 trump entries.
4. As you draw trumps, each time you enter dummy you need to take a finesse.

**NOTE: When dummy is weak and short of entries AND you have lots of high trumps, you should always consider trumping high to preserve entries.**

DUMMY	DECLARER
A10xx	9xx
KJ10	Ax
AKxx	xxx
Ax	QJ1098

You are playing in 3NT on the lead of H9. What is your plan?

1. You have 1 spade, 2 (3) hearts, 2 diamonds and 1 club. You plan to make more winners with your clubs.
2. Since you plan to use your clubs, you need to keep the HA as your entry.
3. You could play the H10 and hope it wins, but if it loses you have just lost your entry to your hand. Furthermore, the lead being the H9 makes it seem likely that the HQ is in your RHO's hand. Bear in mind, if you play the H10 and the HQ is played, ducking won't work because they will return a heart and remove your HA instantly.
4. That means you should rise with the HK at trick 1, winning in dummy.
5. Then you cash the CA. You need to get the CA out of the way, so that when you have to win your HA your clubs are all winners.
6. After cashing the CA, you lead another club. It doesn't matter when the opponents win the CK now, because you have the HA left and 4 club tricks in total, to go with the other 5 winners you started with.

DUMMY	DECLARER
xx	KQ98
Kxx	Axxx
xx	AQxx
AJ10987	K

You are playing in 3NT on the lead of a small diamond which runs around to the DJ and your DQ wins.

Have you made a plan?

1. You have 5 'top' tricks – 2 diamonds, 1 heart, 2 clubs.
2. You plan to use dummy's clubs for extra tricks but... dummy lacks entries. If you lead the CK then cross to the HK to lead the CA, you will need the CQ to be doubleton to make more club tricks. That line of play leads either to 2 club tricks or 6 club tricks. Is there a better option?
3. Given the quality of the club cards, at trick 2 you should lead the CK but you overtake it with the CA. This costs you a trick if the CQ is doubleton but it wins in all other situations (and you come out the same if the CQ is singleton). Now you are already in dummy to lead and remove the CQ. You keep leading clubs until the defence with the CQ.
4. Then you can win the return (diamond) and cross to dummy with your carefully-preserved entry of the HK to lead the other club winners.
5. You make 5 club tricks, 2 diamonds and 2 hearts (and perhaps a spade at the end).

**The key to this hand is that you do not need all 6 club tricks to make your contract. Since you only need 5 tricks you can afford to overtake the CK and ensure the safety of your contract.**