

## Ultimate Defence 08

Following from the previous issue, another diversion: a declarer play problem. You will recall that East made the obvious lead of the ace of clubs, and after receiving a signal from West, continued with a second and then third round of the suit, West ruffing. That was the first three tricks for the defence and West next led the king of diamonds to set up a trick for his queen and sat back waiting for the setting tick to come..

*Dealer North Nil Vul*

♠ 8 4	
♥ A Q J 6 5	
♦ A J 7	
♣ 10 6 2	
♠ J 6 5 3	♠ 9 2
♥ 4 3	♥ 8 7 2
♦ K Q 4 3 2	♦ 10 9 8
♣ 9 4	♣ A K 8 7 3
♠ A K Q 10 7	
♥ K 10 9	
♦ 6 5	
♣ Q J 5	

Now let me take up the rest of the story. Declarer should be able to see that if the jack of spades falls, the contract will make. But if the jack of spades doesn't fall, the contract is doomed, unless...

The answer is that only four spade tricks are required and not five. Even if the jack of spades does not fall, it might be possible to set up the fourth spade by ruffing out the jack. But that can only happen if declarer has an entry left to enjoy the fourth spade. That means keeping the king of hearts as an entry and starting on spades while there is still one trump out. The moment the jack drops, declarer can, of course, cash the king of trumps and thereby draw that last trump.

But, after two rounds the jack has not dropped. If declarer cashes the queen now, East will ruff with the outstanding trump. But declarer can do better. Instead of cashing the queen of spades, declarer can now make 100% certain of the contract by ruffing the seven, while keeping the queen and ten in dummy. Declarer's trumps are too big to be over ruffed (they should be AQJ!). If the jack of spades drops, no harm done, but if it does not, this play pays huge dividends. Dummy is reentered with the king of trumps, drawing East's final trump in the process, and the queen of spades is cashed. This time the jack does fall, and the ten provides the extra discard to dispose of the losing diamond.