

Declarer play -advanced ; making the most of the lead.

Imagine you were in 4Sp and the opponents led the 9 Diamonds.

(declarer)	(dummy)
AKJ5	Q876
854	762
KJ	AQ10
KQ104	J73

Well it would be different if the opponents had led Hrts !!! but they led a diamond and you simply draw trumps and throw a losing Hrt away on the winning diamonds. Easy. The diamond lead by the opponents although no doubt well reasoned is in a sense "poor" and has given you the chance to make your contract.

And if these had been the hands{ on the 9 Diamonds lead }

(declarer)	(dummy)
KJ1054	Q876
85	762
KJ	AQ10
KQ104	J73

You wouldnt be able to draw trumps straight away { lest the opponents win the Ace sp and (belatedly) take their Hearts } so you would play three rounds of diamonds before drawing trumps , discarding a losing Hrt in the process.

Then you would draw trumps. Again the "poor" lead has given us the chance to shine.

What about these hands ?

(declarer)	(dummy)
AKJ5	9876
85	76
KJ	AQ1087
K10642	Q7

Possible losers are 2 Hrts and 1 Spade and 1 club. The lead is the 9 diamonds again.

Well you win the lead ! Now what ? Two plausible lines are to :

- i) take the spade finesse as per usual { cf 8 ever 9 never }; then (if the finesse wins) finish drawing trumps and play diamonds discarding Hrts.
- ii) Don't draw trumps yet -play diamonds discarding a Hrt.

Both approaches have risks ; in (i) the sp finesse might lose and then you have had it ! in (ii) the opponents might be out of diamonds and be able to ruff cheaply NB dummy does have 5 diamonds which in turn means an opponent may be short.

There is actually a third way - I don't know the relative odds but this line feels right!

(iii) Draw trumps by playing the Ace + King spades !! (if the Q drops great , draw the last trump). If the Q Sp hasn't dropped then leave trumps and set about playing diamonds to throw Hrts.

Despite knowing all about 8 ever/9 never we deliberately played the A+ K to draw some of the opponents trumps and *then* turned to diamonds to throw Hrts.

