

In 3NT everyone knows that playing a long suit out can pay dividends. Here we have the lead of a Club.

8) AQ xxxx
 AKQ xxx
 AKxxx xxx
 Axx Kxx

The clubs are a worry of course.

There are two main possibilities here :

- i) play on the diamonds ie play Ace diamonds , play King of diamonds , play a small diamond giving up the lead (and hoping that the remaining diamonds are winners }. ie hoping the diamonds break 3-2
 or
- ii) take the spade finesse.

Well we need to know which of these lines offer the best chance. The answer is that the diamonds are by far the best chance.

- i) play on diamonds { a 3-2 break is 68% }
- ii) spade finesse { a finesse is 50% }

See if you can remember which is the most likely of the following :-

- a) a finesse {AQ -xx } or a suit breaking 3-3 {AKQx-----xxx}
- b) a finesse {AQ--xx} or a suit breaking 3-2 {AKxxx ---xxx}
- c) a finesse missing the Q with 8 cards { AKJx -----xxxx}
 OR
 playing for the drop missing the Q with 8 cards {AKJx -----xxxx}
- d) playing for the drop missing the Q with 9 cards {AKJxx ----- xxxx}
 OR
 finessing when missing the Q with 9 cards {AKJxx -----xxxx}

Finally a hand where a knowledge of the best percentage line will be needed but you will still need your wits about you.

3NT on a club lead

AQxx	xxx	with only 8 tricks on offer you will need one more from a spade finesse or from a diamond break . NB you will not have time to take the spade finesse <i>and if it loses</i> try the diamond break. Well ? {Ans = Duck the first diamond }
AKQ	xxx	
xxx	AKxxx	
AKx	xx	