

THE HOLD-UP, II

BY ALFRED P. SHEINWOLD

The hold-up is so valuable that it is often overdone. One must be equally familiar with stock situations in which it is *wrong* to hold up. For example, it is sometimes wise to win an early trick for fear of a shift:

North dealer; East-West vulnerable

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

SOUTH	WEST	NORTH	EAST
1 ♥	Pass	1 ♣	Pass
2 NT	Pass	2 ♣	Pass
		3 NT	(All Pass)

West leads the three of spades, and South cannot afford the luxury of a hold-up, for if East switched to diamonds, the fat would be in the fire. The practical declarer wins with dummy's ace of spades and leads a heart.

Sonny Moyses assures me that this maneuver is puerile, since he has never succeeded in bringing it off. In reply, I ask whether the players in your regular game are likely to step up with the ace of hearts at trick two. [In a modern expert game, they are. Maybe it makes it tougher on a strong East to win with the king of spades and to take a club finesse.—Ed.] True, this is a play that no good player should ever miss. What

possible reason can declarer have for ignoring the long clubs? Obviously, South is trying to steal a heart trick; and East should put up his ace at once with mingled contempt and resentment. Even if East is alert enough to put up the ace of hearts, he must realize that a spade continuation will do the defense no good; he must shift to diamonds.

From South's point of view, the ace of hearts may well be in the West hand. If West wins the second trick, a spade continuation may be forthcoming, especially since East has played a high spade at the first trick. As the cards lie, if South manages to steal a heart trick, he will switch to clubs and succeed.

As a general rule, it is unwise to hold up at the expense of a trick in the suit. For example, if a low card is led into your ace-jack-ten, and the queen or king is played by third hand, taking the ace ensures a second trick in the suit. Still, a second trick in the suit may be less important than severing defensive transportation.

South dealer; both sides vulnerable

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

SOUTH	WEST
1 ♣	Pass
2 NT	Pass

Here, when East spades on the six-of should win the trick retain the chance of spade trick but a slip in case the club finesse would be better to ace until the third round.

Probably the most size of the situation should not hold up purpose is to prevent

East dealer; both sides

NORTH	WEST
♠ A	♠ A
♥ A	♥ A
♦ A	♦ A
♣ K	♣ K

WEST
♠ K J 8 7 2
♥ 7 6 2
♦ 9 8 5
♣ A 7

SOUTH	WEST
♠ 10	♠ 10
♥ K	♥ K
♦ K	♦ K
♣ Q	♣ Q

SOUTH	WEST
Pass	Pass
2 NT	Pass

West leads the seven declarer should win the prevent West from running he come on lead in need fear only a five and East is marked in spades since other have made an unthick low spade from a suit queen-jack. (Had son

declarer have for
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 card is led into
 nd the queen or
 hand, taking the
 trick in the suit.
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 vering defensive

vulnerable
 7
 7 2
 6 2
 EAST
 ♠ Q 8 5
 ♥ 9 6 5 2
 ♦ Q J 6 4
 ♣ 5 3
 10
 18 4

SOUTH	WEST	NORTH	EAST
1 ♣	Pass	1 ♦	Pass
2 NT	Pass	3 NT	(All Pass)

Here, when East plays the queen of spades on the six-of-spades lead, South should win the trick, not so much to retain the chance of a possible second spade trick but a second spade stopper in case the club finesse loses. If the club finesse went the other way, it would be better to hold up the spade ace until the third round.

Probably the most difficult-to-recognize of the situations in which declarer should not hold up occurs when the purpose is to prevent an unblock:

East dealer; both sides vulnerable

WEST		NORTH		EAST			
♠ K J 8 7 2	♥ 7 6 2	♠ A 6	♥ A Q 5	♠ Q 4	♥ 9 8 4 3		
♦ 9 8 5	♣ A 7	♦ A 10 6	♣ K J 9 8 2	♦ J 7 3 2	♣ 6 5 3		
SOUTH		WEST		NORTH		EAST	
♠ 10 9 5 3	♥ K J 10	♠ 10 8 5 2	♥ 8 7 2	♠ A J	♥ K 3	♠ A Q J 8 7 2	♥ A K 7
♦ K Q 4	♣ Q 10 4	♦ Q J 6	♣ K 6	♦ A K 7	♣ A Q J 8 7 2		
SOUTH		WEST		NORTH		EAST	
Pass	Pass	1 ♣	Pass	1 ♥	Pass		
2 NT	Pass	3 NT	(All Pass)	Pass	Pass		

West leads the seven of spades, and declarer should win the first trick to prevent West from running spades should he come on lead in clubs. Declarer need fear only a five-two spade split, and East is marked with a high card in spades since otherwise West would have made an unthinkable lead of a low spade from a suit headed by king-queen-jack. (Had someone bid spades,

West might think about underleading that sequence, but he is more likely to have been dealt a lesser holding.) South would be well advised to make the same play if he held four spades to the ten without the nine. Then, there would be a risk that East could unblock in spades, get on lead in clubs, and lead through in spades; but East's doubleton might be honor-nine.

An unpleasant reason for not holding up is sheer desperation, as here:

South dealer; neither side vulnerable

WEST		NORTH		EAST			
♠ Q 10 8 5 2	♥ 8 7 2	♠ 9 6	♥ A 10 9 5 4	♠ K 7 4 3	♥ Q J 6		
♦ Q J 6	♣ K 6	♦ 8 5 4	♣ 10 9 5	♦ 10 9 3 2	♣ 4 3		
SOUTH		WEST		NORTH		EAST	
♠ A J	♥ K 3	♠ Q 10 8 5 2	♥ 8 7 2	♠ K 7 4 3	♥ Q J 6	♠ A Q J 8 7 2	♥ A K 7
♦ A K 7	♣ A Q J 8 7 2	♦ Q J 6	♣ K 6	♦ 10 9 3 2	♣ 4 3		
SOUTH		WEST		NORTH		EAST	
1 ♣	Pass	1 ♥	Pass	Pass	Pass		
3 NT	Pass	Pass	Pass	Pass	Pass		

After West leads the spade five and East plays the king, South must plan for a losing club finesse. If he ducks the first trick, the spade continuation will clarify the suit for the defense. But if South wins the first trick, enters dummy with a heart, and takes the club finesse, West must make a decision. For all he knows, South started with ace-jack-low in spades. Perhaps West will continue spades, perhaps not.

If South held ace-low in spades, it would still be best for him to win the first trick, which might leave West in some doubt about the spade layout.

Here is a variant of the standard anti-hold-up play of the queen from ace-queen-low by third hand that offers points of interest for both sides:

NORTH
 ♠ 5
 ♥ A J
 ♦ K Q J 7 6
 ♣ A J 8 3 2

WEST
 ♠ K 9 6 3 2
 ♥ 7 6 5 2
 ♦ A 8
 ♣ 9 4

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

SOUTH
 ♠ Q 10 8 7
 ♥ K Q 8
 ♦ 10 9 4
 ♣ Q 10 5

Twenty-First-Century auction:

SOUTH	WEST	NORTH	EAST
—	—	1 ♦	Pass
1 ♠	Pass	2 ♣	Pass
2 ♦	Pass	3 ♣	Pass
3 NT	Pass	Pass	Pass

West leads the three of spades, and East, thinking it likely that South has a sure spade trick, casually plays the jack. South wins the trick, but the defense retains the transportation necessary to defeat the contract even though it will get in only with the ace of diamonds. If East played ace and jack, the best West could do would be to take South's queen with the king and shift to clubs, but declarer could counter that by winning with dummy's ace and attacking diamonds. [Or West could duck the queen of spades, hoping that

South, who might not have the ten of diamonds, would next take a club finesse.—M.F.]

A different form of retaining entries is often misplayed by both sides:

North dealer; North-South vulnerable

NORTH
 ♠ 7 3 2
 ♥ A Q 9
 ♦ Q J 10 9 4
 ♣ A 10

WEST
 ♠ 8 5
 ♥ 8 7 4 2
 ♦ K 5
 ♣ 9 8 6 5 2

EAST
 ♠ K Q 9 6 4
 ♥ 6 5 3
 ♦ A 6
 ♣ 7 4 3

SOUTH
 ♠ A J 10
 ♥ K J 10
 ♦ 8 7 3 2
 ♣ K Q J

SOUTH	WEST	NORTH	EAST
—	—	1 ♦	1 ♠
2 NT	Pass	3 NT	(All Pass)

West leads the eight of spades. An average East puts up the queen, and an average South wins with the ace. South then leads a diamond, and West takes the king to continue spades, defeating the contract. Declarer would succeed if he ducked the first trick, so that West would be out of spades when he came on lead in diamonds. East could preclude that hold-up by executing one of his own, ducking at trick one to preserve the value of his partner's diamond entry.

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The normal two-suit declarer's side-suit ruff. Others are hander must re- to prevent dec long side suit.

WEST
 ♠ 6 5
 ♥ A 10 9 7
 ♦ A 8 4 2
 ♣ 10 9 5

The contract South. West le the play appear the declarer. Declar ace of clubs an hearts; a trump have done no g with a club. Dec ruffed a low hea the table, winni Another heart v and East overtr ers' last two sp divided, South control, and the