

Giving Count

Board 1
 East Deals
 None Vul

♠ 10 9 4
 ♥ Q 10 6
 ♦ Q J 10 5
 ♣ A 7 6

♠ K Q 6 3
 ♥ A K J
 ♦ A K 4
 ♣ 5 3 2

♠ 8 5 2
 ♥ 9 4 3
 ♦ 9 3
 ♣ K Q J 10 9

♠ A J 7
 ♥ 8 7 5 2
 ♦ 8 7 6 2
 ♣ 8 4

West North East South
 2 NT Pass 3 NT All pass

Lead: ♦ Q

North indicates they do not like the suit lead by their partner.

Declarer wins and leads a club towards Dummy. North ducks and South plays low to indicate an even number of clubs. It is important to give count, because if South has the Ace, they can now determine when to take the trick.

It looks like South has two clubs, therefore by deduction East has 3. Therefore North should hold up until the 3rd round of clubs. This means East can no longer get to Dummy to enjoy the last two clubs!

Board 2
 South Deals
 E-W Vul

♠ 6 4 3
 ♥ A
 ♦ K Q J 7 5
 ♣ J 9 8 7

♠ 9 5 2
 ♥ K Q J 10
 ♦ A 6 3
 ♣ Q 4 3

♠ J 8 7
 ♥ 7 4 3 2
 ♦ 9 8 2
 ♣ 10 6 5

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

West North East South
 Pass 2♦ Pass 3 NT

Lead: ♥ K

This is a natural lead despite the suit being bid by South.

East treats this as a request for count and plays the ♥ 2 to show an even number.

Because Declarer did not show further interest in hearts, and you can now see Dummy, West can easily establish partner has a 4 card heart suit.

When Declarer starts to play on the diamonds both East and West can give count. If East plays the ♦ 9, West can establish they have an odd number in that suit (it must be 3).

The only sure entry to dummy was taken by the opening lead and West can now work out that South has only two diamonds, so knows they only have to hold up one round. This play means EW can go 1 light so long as West does not play on clubs after winning their 3 hearts. If West does not hold up, EW will make the contract.

NB: Once West gets the count on partner's hearts (4) and diamonds (3) they can work out that East has 6 cards in spades and clubs.

Board 3
 South Deals
 E-W Vul

♠ A 3 2
 ♥ Q 9 8
 ♦ A J 8
 ♣ Q 8 4 2

♠ K 7 4
 ♥ A 10 4 3 2
 ♦ 7 6
 ♣ J 6 5

♠ J 6 5
 ♥ 7 5
 ♦ K Q 9 3 2
 ♣ 10 9 7

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

West North East South
 Pass 3 NT All pass 1 NT

Lead: ♥ 2.

Dummy plays the ♥ 8. Because East cannot beat this card, they give count by playing the ♥ 5 to show an even number.

This should be very obvious to West that it is count and not attitude, as West would have played the King if they had it.

After the play of clubs, East should signal they want a diamond (but must not discard a spade in case their Jack comes good).

When Declarer plays ♠ A then small to the ♠ Q, West gets in with the ♠ K. They do not continue the hearts, so plays a diamond. East wins with ♦ Q and returns a heart.

West plays another diamond. If Dummy ducks, East wins with the ♦ K and now plays their ♠ J to take the contract light. If Dummy takes the second diamond trick, East has the ♠ J as an entry to still take the contract light. If NS play the spades differently, they have a chance to make their contract

Board 4
 West Deals
 Both Vul

♠ 10 8 6
 ♥ A K 9 6 3
 ♦ Q 9
 ♣ K J 4

♠ K 7
 ♥ Q J 10 4
 ♦ J 4
 ♣ A Q 9 6 5

♠ J 9 5 4
 ♥ 8 7
 ♦ A K 6 2
 ♣ 10 7 3

♠ A Q 3 2
 ♥ 5 2
 ♦ 10 8 7 5 3
 ♣ 8 2

West North East South
 1♣ 1♥ All pass 1♠ Pass

Lead: ♥ K

This contract may end up in 3♣ if North bids again.

North has chosen to ask for count as they are hoping partner is short in hearts for a ruff.

South plays the ♥ 2 North now knows partner has 1, 2 or 4 Hearts

At trick 2, North plays the ♥ A. Declarer follows, so now North knows partner has 2 hearts (if they had 4, West would ruff the second heart).

The 3rd heart from North is low, showing suit preference, to indicate they want a club return. South obliges, West plays low or their ♣ Q and North wins ♣ K.

North now knows EW is out of clubs so now should switch to spades or diamonds. There is a diamond, spade and another club to win for 1 light.

Because North asked for count in hearts, they are sure to take this contract light.

Giving Count

Board 5 ♠ A 9 8 7 3
 North Deals ♥ Q J 10 Lead: ♥ K.
 N-S Vul ♦ K J 9 3
 ♣ Q

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

N		
W	E	
	S	

♠ K Q 5 As soon as Dummy is on the table East can see 8 hearts in total.
 ♥ 8 7 4 3
 ♦ 10 7 5
 ♣ A K 3

When West plays low, East determines their partner has 2 or 4 hearts.

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
Pass	1 ♠	Pass	2 NT
All pass	3 ♦	Pass	4 ♠

North was asked to play their Q♥ on the lead to make it look as though they had a singleton !

North may attempt to mislead the opposition by playing the ♥ Q on the first trick !

East can now think their partner has 4 hearts, therefore must hold the JT9 so can safely continue hearts by playing the Ace..

As soon as North plays another Heart, East can spot the false carding and now knows their partner can only have 2 Hearts. They play another Heart for a ruff but has no suit to show for their partner to return, so West ruffs and plays the ♦ A to ensure they take the contract light.

Count means Declarer's attempt at bluffing did not work !

Board 6 ♠ 9 7 2
 East Deals ♥ 8 6 Lead: ♦ K
 E-W Vul ♦ J 9 3 2
 ♣ A 10 9 6

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

N		
W	E	
	S	

♠ 4 3
 ♥ 7 4 3
 ♦ A K 8 6 5
 ♣ J 8 4

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
1 ♠	Pass	1 ♥	Pass
4 ♥	All pass	2 ♣	Pass

By listening to the bidding, they know of at least 9 cards in Declarer's hand. Therefore Declarer is will hold either 3-1, 2-2, or 0-4 in spades and diamonds. The odds are a 3-1 or 2-2

Asking for count by South will be useful, because if partner shows 3 diamonds, it is safe to play the ♦ A. If North shows an even number (2 or 4 cards), then it is too risky to continue the suit, especially when they see the ♦ Q in Dummy.

Board 7 ♠ 10 9 7 6 3
 South Deals ♥ J
 Both Vul ♦ J 9 7
 ♣ Q J 5 2

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

N		
W	E	
	S	

♠ K Q 8 2 This is a natural lead, but North treats it as asking for count and plays the ♠ 9. This indicates an odd number so must it is not a 4-card suit and must be a 5-card suit.
 ♥ Q 10 6
 ♦ K Q 6 5 3
 ♣ 8

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
Dbl	1 ♠	4 ♥	1 ♦
			All pass

South now knows they cannot lead another spade when they get in, as Declarer cannot have any more.

EW can wrap up 4 ♥, but if South plays another spade when in with the ♥ Q, they will gift the ♠ J to EW who can then pitch a losing ♦ in East's hand and make 5.

Board 8 ♠ A K 6 5 4
 West Deals ♥ A Q 3
 None Vul ♦ J 9 8
 ♣ Q 5

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

N		
W	E	
	S	

♠ Q 7 3 2
 ♥ K J 9
 ♦ A 10
 ♣ J 7 4 2

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
Pass	1 ♠	Pass	3 ♠
Pass	4 ♠	All pass	

Lead: ♣ A
 You could lead the ♣ K for count, but with only 4 of the suit, you may prefer to see if partner has the ♣ Q so asks for attitude.

After the lead, EW can see the shape of Dummy, but knows little about Declarer other than they have at least 4 or 5 spades.

This hand is all about giving count while Declarer plays their spades, then hearts and clubs, in case it is useful and if not, a good practice !.

As you get more adept at count, West will soon know their partner has 2 spades, 3 hearts and most likely 4 diamonds based on the lead, so by inference, that leaves them with 4 clubs.

East, on the other hand, will know partner also has 2 spades and 4 hearts. It may take a little longer to find out about the clubs and diamonds, but likely to be 3-4 or 4-3.

Did South sit and watch the cards and try to work out all the hands during play ?