



NT Holdup Play

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In match point games, no trump hands give a 10 point bonus for making game, and game is reached with just nine tricks!

Declarer play is often a race with opponents to set up suits and collect tricks. Generally, declarer seeks to drive out losers early, then run their suits. Finesses may have to be taken towards the "safe" hand. Declarer often wants to hide the closed hand values.

Hold-up Play

- A 3 NT contract scenario:
1. Opponents begin to attack your weakest suit.
 2. You don't have your required tricks off the top.
 3. Setting up a suit will let opponents in to continue their attack.

One option is to use a "hold-up" play, which is designed to sever communication between the opponents. This increases your chances of making your contract.

- Things to consider:
1. Remember the bidding
 2. What does lead card imply?
lead of high honor shows long suit, probably touching honors
lead of 4th best can indicate length of attack suit
 3. How many rounds to duck?
 4. How fast can you set up your winners?
 5. Can you finesse into the "safe" hand?

Rule of Seven - Take the number of cards you hold in the attack suited, subtract from seven to reveal the number of times you must duck. Or John's rule, with Ace duck twice!

		<u>North</u>	
		x x	
		K J x	
		K J x x	
		A 9 x x	
<u>West</u>		<u>East</u>	
K Q J 9 x		x x x	
x x x		T x x x	
x x		Q x x	
Q J x		T x x	
		<u>South</u>	
		A x x	
		A Q x	
		A T x x	
		K x x	

Example 1 - Contract 3NT by South

Opening lead K of spades.

Duck twice - severing communication.

Finesse diamonds into the "safe" hand.

Bring home your 3NT contract.
 You win 1 spade, 3 hearts, 3 diamonds and 2 clubs.

Winner winner, chicken dinner!

Practice Hands for NT Hold Up

Example 2

J T x
T x x x
A x x
K J T

Q x x	x x x x
x x x	Q J x
K Q J T 9	x x x
x x	A x x

A K x
A K x
x x
Q x x x x

Contract: **3NT in the South**

Lead: K of diamonds

N/S have just five quick tricks off the top. However, clubs can be played to yield four more tricks.

Duck the opening lead twice. Win with the Ace of diamonds and push out the club Ace. East can not return a diamond, so you can take 9 tricks.



Example 3

A x
A x
A x x
Q J x x x x

J x x	T x x
K T x x	Q x x x
K Q x x x	J x
x	x x x x

K Q x x x
J x x
x x x
A K

Contract: **3NT by South**

Lead K of diamonds

Whoaa Nellie! Don't give away tricks! Count what you have off the top.

You have 6 clubs tricks, 1 heart, 1 diamond and 3 or more Spade tricks with the chance for 5. Run your clubs, collect the side aces, then run the Spades. Why give up 2 tricks when you can make 12 on this hand?

Example 4

Q x x
K x x
A J 9 8 x
x x

T x x	J x x x
Q T x x	J x x
x	K x x
K J 9 x x	Q T x

A K x
A x x
Q T x x
A x x

Contract: **3NT by South**

Lead: 5 of clubs

Duck twice. Finesse diamonds into East, the safe hand. The finesse loses, but East can no longer reach West, so the contract is safe.