

You see ♦AQJxx on the board and declarer seems to be in no hurry to play diamonds. Why is that? If you don't have a stopper, guess what – it is likely that your partner doesn't have a stopper either. Declarer has diamonds locked in and is setting up additional tricks while there is time (while holding controls in the other suits). Maybe you should put some urgency on your trick-taking possibilities? ...might not be much time left for you.

Different hands dictate the urgency of running a long suit. Here are three thoughts on this:

1. As in the example above, work on other suits (while you have time) to setup extra tricks.
2. Run the suit immediately. Do it early in the hand. Make the opponents guess what to discard while they have less information to go on. If you wait until trick 4 or 5 some of our club members will have already figured out the length of all your suits, where the ♥9 is and what you ate for breakfast. Earlier in the play they might discard the ♣3 from ♣T843. This might be exactly what you need. Ain't gonna work later in the play.
3. Run 3 cards in the suit. Then recognize that you are squeezing yourself and switch to another suit. While playing the other suit, your clever opponents find a way to disable your entries to the board. Now you play losers from your hand and discard your good tricks from the board. Painful at the time, but I've said it before, humility is good for the soul. It keeps you grounded. If you feel that club members are laughing at you (or as we say – “with you”), take solace. You are a more rounded and grounded (and pounded) human being. You are always growing when you play bridge. Savor that thought!

Each column I write has an example or two of something I have seen us mess up during a CHAT session. I take a few notes on Monday mornings so I have some material for the current monthly article. I research what the experts say on the topic to try to give correct advice. I have received a lot of kudos from club members on these articles. Thank you! I welcome critique if you disagree with the advice. The BS that I include in the articles does NOT have to be correct. I think it is actually better if it has some errors.

I still see us mess up on the same topics I have already written about. No surprise. If I had total recall of all the bridge articles I have read (and understood at the time), I would probably be an alabaster life master by now. But, if you are still making these mistakes, you might want to re-read the advice. So, here is an index of the articles written to date. The articles are on the club website:

<https://www.rochestermnbridge.net/CHATbr-pg.html>

Note: The initial articles (through July 2017) talk about the CHAT initiative - What it is and how it works. There are tips on being in synch with your partner, following bridge protocol and handling success and failure in a positive manner. These articles do not focus on how to bid and play well and do not have many bridge examples/tips.

Date **Bridge Article Content**

Jan 2017 CHAT Bridge overview. How it works.

Feb 2017 CHAT sessions – a feel for what a session is like – “Learn by playing.” Plus, a thank you to Mary Anderson who had the vision to start the CHAT initiative.

March 2017 Some bridge protocol – don't snap the cards, too slow/too quick. Different answers to the same question - Should you listen to Audrey or Pat?

- April 2017** Mostly BS. – Anxiety and fear at the table. Using prayer at the table. Is it ethical?
- May 2017** Lying, Deception and Blasphemy. Overdoing the mentoring thing.
- June 2017** Thanks to Ann Van Ryn for all her work and follow-through on Mary’s CHAT initiative. Also, handling mistakes effectively; free psychological counseling on how to deal with bridge misfortune.
- July 2017** Hands that are hard to bid. Try to deceive your opponents more than your partner. Discussion on the ethics of deception and lying during bridge play. (It’s OK)
- Note:** **The articles after July 2017 focus on the bidding and play of the hand. Each article has examples that give advice on actual CHAT play could have been improved.**
- Aug 2017** New Minor Forcing; Opening Leads; Second hand Low; Policing yourself at the table.
- Sept 2017** Bids that limit your hand, Watching for partner’s first discard, NT vs Suit contract, Cowboy boots and what they can do for your game.
- Oct 2017** Negative doubles, Limit raises, Deep analysis on the opening lead – stay ahead of the opponents (mind reading and understanding the psyche of club members).
- Nov 2017** Blackwood and the greed that comes with it, planning for entries to the board/hand.
- Dec 2017** Getting clues to help your play of the hand, Patience; don’t help your opponents; 2nd hand low; 3rd hand high; Bentley’s law - getting even with certain opponents.
- Jan 2018** Analyze the opening lead, Review the bidding. Where are the points? Plan the play.
- Feb 2018** Assisting you partner – showing attitude; choosing your first discard carefully; strip and endplay, give the opponents a chance to make a mistake.
- March 2018** “Eight ever, Nine never” – finding the queen; playing in 4X4 vs 5X3 suit contracts;
- April 2018** Be pushy. Complicate the bidding for opponents (and maybe your partner; sometimes there is collateral damage).
- May 2018** Be quick. Be slow (not too slow). Patience: “Slow shows”. Police your table on slow play; help the director out.
- June 2018** Keeping an entry card. Don’t get locked on the board. Club compassion!
- July 2018** LEADS: Opening leads; 4th best, top of nothing,... discerning what info is available from opponents opening lead of a suit.
- Aug 2018** Reverse bidding. Getting an extra trick. Deception – Good!
- Sept 2018** No article.

Arne

“Mistakes increase your experience and experience decreases your mistakes.”