



You are in 3NT and West has led the ♠J. You are lucky that the defenders didn't find a club lead. However, if West can get on lead early and start the clubs, you will still be in trouble. Solution: make sure that if you are going to lose the lead early on, it is to East. East can't hurt you by leading a club. You have 6 top tricks. How do you safely develop 3 more?

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

You get to 6NT, and find you have 11 tricks off the top. West leads the ♥10. Your twelfth could come from dummy's fourth spade, if they break 3-3, or from a successful finesse in clubs. There is a way you can try out both options, so that even if the first one doesn't work out, you can still try the second. Can you see it?

♠ 8 7 4 3 ♥ A Q J ♦ A K Q J 10 ♣ 7		♠ A K 9 ♥ K 7 4 ♦ 8 7 5 ♣ A Q 6 2
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You are in 6NT, and West leads the J. Again, you have 11 top tricks. The twelfth could come from your 4<sup>th</sup> spade, your 4<sup>th</sup> diamond, or the club finesse. But if the spades and diamonds don't work out, you may not have to take the finesse at all! Can you work out how to put West on the lead, and force him to lead a club into your AQ?

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

### Summary

- Take time to make a plan at trick one
- Keep the danger hand off the lead
- Look for ways of giving yourself extra chances to make a tough contract
- Don't be afraid to give up the lead at a crucial time - you might be able to get a favorable lead back from the defenders