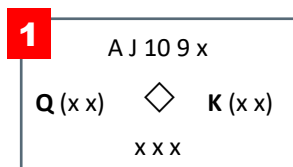# Declarer play mini-lesson 4: *Playing for 'split honours'*
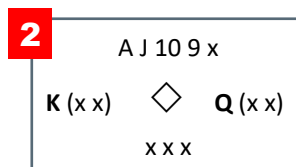
> *When you're missing two honours in a suit - eg K and Q - playing for split honours has a 76% chance of success.*

If you're missing the King or Queen of a suit, you can finesse and hope that the missing honour is in the right place - it's a 50% chance. But what if you're missing the King *and* the Queen? Obviously you're going to lose one trick. But if you play it right, most of the time that's all you lose. Where are the missing honours likely to be?
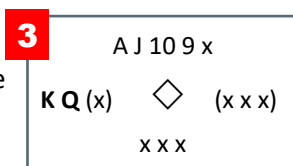
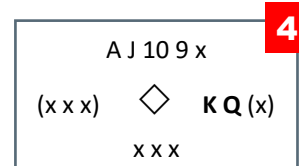Well, most (52%) of the time the honours will be 'split'. Like this:

**1**
A J 10 9 x
**Q** (x x)   ◇   **K** (x x)
x x x

or like this:

**2**
A J 10 9 x
**K** (x x)   ◇   **Q** (x x)
x x x

And the rest of the time they'll be together, either like this (24%):

**3**
A J 10 9 x
**K Q** (x)   ◇   (x x x)
x x x

or like this (24%):

**4**
A J 10 9 x
(x x x)   ◇   **K Q** (x)
x x x

How do you play the suit so that most (76%) of the time you make 4 of the 5 tricks?

## HAND 1

You're declarer in 6 hearts (doubled!), sitting West.

Assuming the trumps split 2-1 (which they do) how to you play to make 12 tricks?



Hand of the week 06 June 2018

Dlr: North
Vul: All

North leads
♠ K

♠ 8
♥ 10 9 7 4 2
♦ 8 7 2
♣ 10 9 3 2

NORTH
13
SOUTH

♠ A 10 6
♥ A K 8 6 3
♦ A J 10 4 3
♣

| | *Bidding* | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **W** | **N** | **E** | **S** |
| | 1♠ | 3♣ | 4♠ |
| 5♥ | Pass | 6♥ | Dble |
| Pass | Pass | Pass | |

## HAND 2

You're declarer in 3NT, sitting East.

- After South's heart lead you have eight guaranteed top tricks. What are they?
- How many times can you afford to lose the lead?
- What's your best chance of a 9th trick?



Hand of the week 24 May 2017

Dlr: North
Vul: None

♠
♥
♦
♣

♠ 9 7 2
♥ 7 6 2
♦ J 10 9
♣ K Q J 4

NORTH
WEST   EAST
SOUTH

♠ Q J 6
♥ A Q
♦ A 8 3
♣ A 9 8 6 5

♠
♥
♦
♣

South leads
♥ 4

| | *Bidding* | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **W** | **N** | **E** | **S** |
| | 1♥ | 2♣ | Pass |
| 3♣ | 3♥ | 3NT | Pass |
| Pass | Pass | | |

Both hands are taken from HOTW articles on the *Bridge @ Box* website. Each article has a main teaching point as well as a short discussion of the auction and a summary of what happened when the hands were played.

From the home page (*www.boxbridge.co.uk*) select **Improvers' pages** from the menu, top left, and then **Declarer play (in a suit)** or **Declarer play (in NT)**, as appropriate. The articles are in time sequence (most recent at the top).

*Chris Jones, October 2018*