

## DEVIOUS DEFENCES

Mark Horton from England wrote about a very effective duck from the Alt-Inv Mixed tournament, held online in June.

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

West	North	East	South
Cullin	Bakhshi	Michielsen	Tulin
			1♥
Pass	1♠	Pass	3♥
All Pass			

West led the ♣9 and declarer put up dummy's Queen – King – Ace, then played a heart to the ♥K. This was his only entry to dummy, so his next step was to finesse the diamonds.

*Note: The diamond finesse is your best option, because it is repeatable (and therefore a 50% prospect). Relying in hearts breaking 3-3 is a mere 35.5% chance.*

He led the ♦J. If West had won this and continued with a second club, the contract would almost certainly have failed by a trick (with the defence being able to promote a trump trick by leading clubs). However, West decided to duck the diamond lead.

When declarer innocently continued with a second diamond finesse, West won and returned a diamond for his partner to trump. East ruffed, cashed the ♣J and continued with the ♣10. Declarer discarded a spade, as did West. East's next action was to cash the ♠K. When that held and West played the ♠10, she knew declarer held no more spades, so reverted to her last club, promoting West's ♥10, for two down, for 200.

With the other table playing in 2♥, making 9 tricks, there was an 8 IMP swing (with the extra undertrick contributing 3 of those IMPs).

There are plenty of opportunities for devious defensive plays – the sort of devious actions which can confound declarer whilst not diverting your partner. Here's another typical example:

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

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
	Pass	1♣	1♠
1NT	Pass	2NT	Pass
3♣	Pass	3NT	All Pass

North led the ♠2 to South. Assuming the ♠2 lead indicates an honour, rather than playing the ♠K at trick 1, what about trying the ♠A instead? Then when you return a small spade, if declarer holds the ♠Q-10, as was the situation at the table, she may have to guess whether to play the Queen or 10.

If you win trick 1 with the King, declarer is far more likely to play the Queen on a small spade return at trick 2. Your partner will never be deflected from continuing spades, so it's a no-cost play – designed to deceive declarer only.

Such ideas are simple additions to your defensive repertoire. Whilst you may not get the opportunity to execute such a deceptive coup very often, imagine your delight when it succeeds.

**Barbara Travis**

[www.bridgewithbarbara.com](http://www.bridgewithbarbara.com)