

## Retaining an option

If at first you don't succeed then try, try again. This may not be particularly helpful for potential skydivers but at the bridge table this mantra has some merit.

Take the following hand as an example:

72  
Q6  
AK10943  
AJ6

K94  
K102  
Q5  
K8752

Dealer North

Game all

West	North	East	South
	1D	Pass	2NT
Pass	3NT	All pass	

The lead of 6S goes to the 2, Q and your K.

Clearly if the diamonds break 3:2 or the JD is a singleton there is no problem. When you think it all too easy then look for what can go wrong and have Plan B in reserve if possible.

One cannot concede a diamond trick if the suit misbehaves, for then you will lose a heart, at least three spades and a diamond. Plan B must then rely on the club suit and for that to work West must hold Q and one or two more. If you play the diamonds in the normal way starting with the Q then you will be in dummy with the second diamond trick when you receive the bad news about the bad diamond break but are in no position to do anything about it.

To retain the option of trying for five club tricks, therefore, you must lead your small diamond to the A or K and return to the QD. Now if the diamonds are not breaking you are in your hand to finesse the clubs through West and hold your breath when you play the J.