

## Elimination Play

Suppose you are W and you are declarer in 4S on the lead of a Spade

W	E
S – A Q 10 3 2	S – K J 9 5 4
H – A 10 9	H – K J 8
D – A 10 9	D – K J 8
C – 3 2	C – 5 4

You have 9 certain tricks and can make 10 if you correctly guess who has 1 of the red Queens and will make 11 if you guess correctly on both Queens but only 9 if guess incorrectly for both Queens. Is there a way to guarantee at least 10 tricks? Yes there is. The technique is called Elimination Play. Win the opening S lead and draw trumps in 2 or 3 rounds. Then lead a C. Defenders will win 2 club tricks but then they have to lead either a red card or another C. If they lead a 3<sup>rd</sup> C you trump it and toss one of your low red cards, say D8. You can then trump the 3<sup>rd</sup> D for at least 10 tricks. You will make 11 if you correctly guess the H finesse. What if defenders, say N, lead a red card after winning the first C? Xmas has come early. You win the trick in the W hand with the lowest card you need to, play 2 more rounds of that suit then lead your 2<sup>nd</sup> C. You will now make exactly 11 tricks. What if the defenders start with their 2 C tricks then lead a S? Draw as many rounds of trumps as you need to take them all out then choose 1 of your red suits and cash A then K then play a 3<sup>rd</sup> round of the suit. If the Q drops on the 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> round of the suit then you have your 10 tricks and can then take a guess on where the Q of the other red suit is to perhaps make 11 tricks. If the Q wins the 3<sup>rd</sup> round of the suit then defenders will either have to lead your other red suit or lead a C and give you a ruff and a discard for your 10 tricks. You will always make 10 tricks or more provided neither defendant has a void in one of the red suits.