

In a Nutshell

The Bath Coup

by Jeremy Dhondy

WHAT IS it?

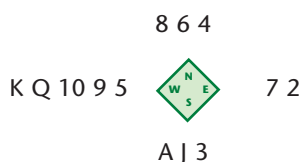
A play by declarer when he holds up an ace when he also has the jack to disturb the opponents' communications.

Where does the phrase come from?

It originates from the game of whist, and is said to have come from the time – two hundred or more years ago – when Bath was a fashionable place to play card games.

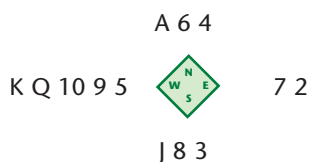
How does it work?

A suit round the table is:



On the lead of the king declarer simply holds up so that if West continues he will surrender a trick. If he wins and East gets in, a second card in that suit will enable East-West to cash all their tricks.

It can also work if the ace and jack are in different hands. On the lead of the king declarer ducks, thus temporarily preventing East-West from continuing the suit:



Are there any considerations to bear in mind before executing a Bath Coup?

Yes, two:

- The declarer must be able to afford to lose the trick.
- A switch to another suit from the opponent left on lead is not dangerous.

What can the defending side do to counter this?

They should play attitude in these positions even if they would normally play a count card on the lead of the king. One simple rule is that you show attitude on the lead of the king if dummy has three small cards or if dummy has the ace and declarer ducks.

From West's point of view his problem is that he does not know who holds the ace and jack in the first example, or the jack in the second.

Where can I find out more?

www.bridgebum.com/bath_coup.php is one of many sources.

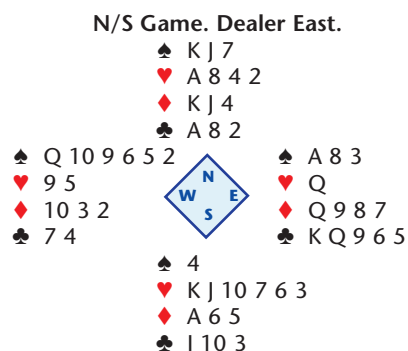


Bridge Online

by Barrie Partridge

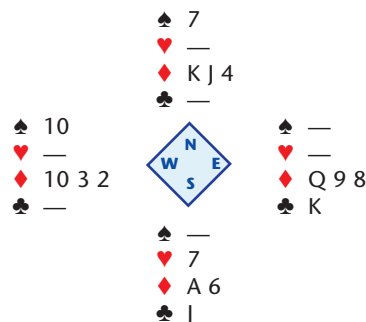
THE PREMIER teams event in the annual Bridge Club Live calendar is the Championship Teams, which takes place over a period of several months. Around 15 to 20 teams of at least four players play around five matches of 24 boards in groups with one match privately arranged each month in the spring and early summer. The leading eight teams from the groups go through to a knock-out stage in the autumn. To facilitate the arrangement of matches, most teams are of about six players.

This board was from one of the group matches this year:



After a competitive auction, David Woulds of Bedfordshire, South, elected to play in 5♥ rather than defend 4♠, which was the contract at the other table, going four off for 800. Could David make this contract and hold the loss to 4 IMPs?

West led the ♣7, won by East's queen. East returned the ♥Q, so declarer took this with the king and removed the remaining trump with the jack, East throwing a club. Declarer tried a spade towards dummy and when no ♠A appeared from West, he put in the ♠J losing to East's ♠A. East returned the ♠3 taken in dummy with the ♠K while the ♦5 was thrown from hand. East's exits strongly suggested holding the ♦Q so, playing for the actual layout, declarer cashed the ♣A (a Vienna Coup) and played out all his trumps, the position on the lead of his last trump being:



When West threw a diamond, declarer threw the ♠7 and East was caught in a squeeze. Having to keep the ♣K, he threw a diamond but declarer took the last three tricks with the ♦A-K-J.

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