

You see  AQJxx on the board and declarer seems to be in no hurry to play diamonds. Why is that? If you don't have a stopper, guess what – it is likely that your partner doesn't have a stopper either.

Declarer has diamonds locked in and is setting up additional tricks while there is time (while holding controls in the other suits). Maybe you should put some urgency on your trick-taking possibilities? ...might not be much time left for you.

Different hands dictate the urgency of running a long suit. Here are three thoughts on this:

1. As in the example above, work on other suits (while you have time) to setup extra tricks.
2. Run the suit immediately. Do it early in the hand. Make the opponents guess what to discard while they have less information to go on. If you wait until trick 4 or 5 some of our club members will have already figured out the length of all your suits, where the  9 is and what you ate for breakfast. Earlier in the play they might discard the  3 from  T843. This might be exactly what you need. Ain't gonna work later in the play.
3. Run 3 cards in the suit. Then recognize that you are squeezing yourself and switch to another suit. While playing the other suit, your clever opponents find a way to disable your entries to the board.

Now you play losers from your hand and discard your good tricks from the board. Painful at the time, but I've said it before, humility is good for the soul. It keeps you grounded.

If you feel that club members are laughing at you (or as we say – “with you”), take solace. You are a more rounded and grounded (and pounded) human being.

You are always growing when you play bridge. **Savor that thought!**

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