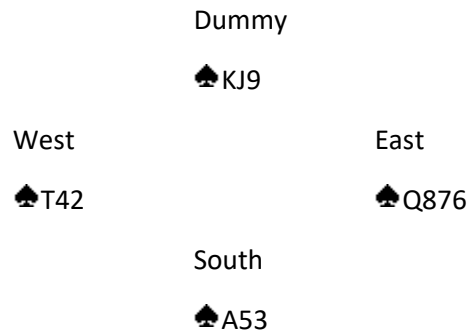


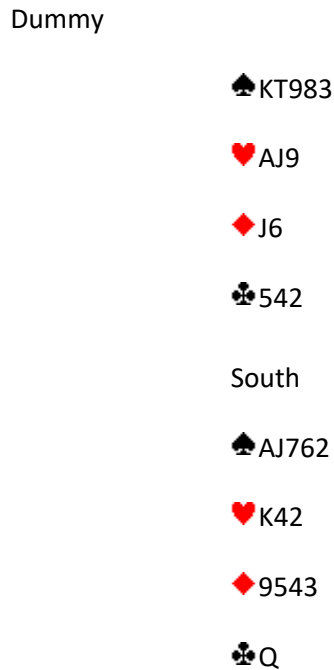
The Backward Finesse

A backward finesse is a simple finesse that's taken in the "opposite" direction:



In this layout, imagine that South needs three spade tricks. The natural line would be to lay down the ♠A and lead toward the jack. In practice, this would lose to East's queen.

If South can deduce where the queen is, however, then the ♠J can be led through East. If East covers with the queen, South wins the ace and then finesses West for the ♠T.



West North East South

Pass 1♥ 1♠

Pass 4♠ All Pass

South makes a simple overcall but gets propelled into game by North.

West's opening lead is the K, and East signals encouragement. West proceeds with the

A, followed by the J. East wins the K and tries the A, which South ruffs.

Having lost three tricks already, South must run the table. 20 combined [HCP](#) are in the North-South hands, and West has shown 8 [HCP](#). Consequently, East probably holds the most or all of the remaining 12 [HCP](#) for his 1 opening bid.

South should therefore realise that a backward finesse is in order.

After drawing trumps (they split 2-1), South leads a heart to dummy's ace and plays the J through East.

The full deal:

North

KT983

AJ9

West

J6

East

54

542

Q

T3

Q8765

AK8

South

QT72

JT9873

AJ762

AK6

K42

9543

Q

If East covers with the Q, South wins and ruffs two diamonds in dummy to make the contract. If East ducks, South simply ducks as well and continues with a heart to his K for the same result.