

Deal 1

South Deals
None Vul

♠ K 7 4
♥ 8 7 2
♦ K 8 2
♣ J 10 7 5

14
7 5
14

West

♠ Q J 10
♥ A 3
♦ 10 9 5 4
♣ A K 3 2



♠ A 8 2
♥ K Q 5
♦ Q J 7 3
♣ Q 6 4

North

East

South

Pass
Pass
3 NT by North
Lead: ♥ J

2 NT
Pass

Pass
Pass

1 ♦
3 NT

You are North and it is your bid. Decide what you would say, then on BID.

You have three reasonable choices. You could bid 2 ♣, you could jump to 3 ♦, or you could jump to 2 NT.

While all are reasonable, the jump to 2 NT stands out as the most constructive by far. Partner bids 3 NT and you pass.

North plays 3 NT. East leads the ♥ J.

Winner count: ♠ 1 : ♥ 3 : ♦ 0 : ♣ 3 : Total = 7

If East has the ♠ K then a finesse will gain you the two winners you need. However, if West has the ♠ K then the finesse will gain you just one winner and you will be hoping for a 3-3 ♣ split for the other. While this is a possible Plan, there is a far better one.

Rather than chance the ♠ finesse, you should immediately start establishing your ♦s. This has the advantage of not giving the defense any NEW

winners - they were always going to get their two high ♦s. So win the ♥ A and play the ♦T. Somebody will take this and probably continue with a ♥. Take the ♥ Q and play the ♦Q. Somebody will take this and probably continue with a ♥. Take the ♥ K and then the rest of your winners. Maybe the ♣s will split 3-3 and give you an overtrick. And if you have assured the contract you MIGHT even try the ♠ finesse.

West would have won and played a ♥, removing your second stopper. When ♣s did not split 3-3 you would have been forced to try a ♦. West would win his ♦ K and drive out the last ♥ stopper. Then East would be able to take the ♦ A plus his established ♥s.

Deal 2

East Deals
None Vul

♠ 8 7
♥ A 8 3
♦ 9 5 2
♣ Q 8 7 4 3

7
6 18
9

West

2 ♥

Pass

4 ♥ by East

Lead: ♠ Q

♠ 9 4
♥ 7 6 5 2
♦ Q 7 6 4
♣ A J 9



♠ Q J 10 5 3
♥ 4
♦ K 10 8 3
♣ K 10 2

North

Pass

Pass

East

1 ♥

4 ♥

South

Pass

Pass

You are East and it is your bid. Decide what you would say, then on BID.

With 19 points and a 5-card ♥ suit you open 1 ♥.

Partner raises you to 2 ♥. What do you bid?

Partner's bid shows 6-10 points. If he has 6 it might be close, but otherwise you should have a game. You bid 4 ♥.

East plays 4 ♥. South leads the ♠ Q.

Losers: ♠ 2 : ♥ 0 : ♦ 1 : ♣ 2 : Total = 5

The three minor suit losers cannot be avoided, but the two ♠ losers can be ruffed in dummy. A small amount of caution is in order. Win the ♠ K and play the ♠ A. Ruff a ♠ with dummy's ♥ 8. North shows out but cannot over-ruff. Return to your hand with the ♦ A and ruff your last ♠ with dummy's ♥ A. Return to your hand with a trump. You will lose three minor suit cards and nothing else.

Deal 3

North Deals
None Vul

♠ J 9 6
♥ A 7
♦ A 6 5 2
♣ J 10 9 4

15
10 7
8

| West | North | East | South |
|--------------|-------|------|-------|
| | 1 NT | Pass | 2 ♣ |
| Pass | 2 ♦ | Pass | 2 ♥ |
| Pass | 3 ♥ | Pass | Pass |
| Pass | | | |
| 3 ♥ by South | | | |
| Lead: ♣ J | | | |

♠ A 7
♥ K 6 4
♦ Q J 8 4
♣ K Q 7 3



♠ K 8 3 2
♥ Q 10 9 5 2
♦ K 7
♣ 6 2

♠ Q 10 5 4
♥ J 8 3
♦ 10 9 3
♣ A 8 5

You are South and it is your bid. Decide what you would say, then on BID.

Because you have an invitational hand with a 4-card Major (♠s) you use Stayman.

After your 2 ♣ bid partner says 2 ♦.

What do you bid next?

Partner does not have 4 (♠s) so you have no 8-card fit there. However, he might have 3 ♥s, so you now bid 2 ♥. Partner will understand you are showing a 5-card suit.

Partner bids 3 ♥. What do you say?

This could go either way. You started out with 9 points, but perhaps you could revalue your hand upward after you find the fit. The problem with that is those two doubletons are in the long-trump hand, and taking ruffs in the long-trump hand doesn't usually add tricks. You take the conservative route and pass.

South plays 3 ♥. West leads the ♣ J.

Losers: ♠ 2 : ♥ 2 : ♦ 1 : ♣ 1 : Total = 6

You may be able to ruff 1 ♠ in dummy, and discard another on a long ♦. And you hope to keep your trump losers to 1.

Start by covering the ♣ J to set up a sure ♣ trick. East wins the ♣ A and returns a ♣, won by dummy's ♣ K. It looks better to start the trumps from your side, so play a ♦ toward your ♦ K. West wins and plays a ♣, which you ruff. Now lead a ♥, playing the ♥ K if West plays low. Assume this wins the trick. Lead a ♥ back, finessing the ♥ 9 since you think West must hold the ♥ A. He does hold it, and takes it right now. West leads a ♠. You win the ♠ A in dummy, play the ♠ 7 to your ♠ K, and ruff a ♠ with dummy's last trump. Now lead dummy's ♦ Q J, discarding a ♠ on the last one. You have only good trumps left.

Deal 4

South Deals
None Vul

♠ A Q 6
♥ K 9
♦ K 6 5 4
♣ A K 10 9

8
19 9
4

♠ K J 7 5 4 2
♥ A 8 4
♦ 7
♣ 8 7 2



♠ 10 9 3
♥ J 10 6 3
♦ Q 10 9 3
♣ J 4

♠ 8
♥ Q 7 5 2
♦ A J 8 2
♣ Q 6 5 3

| West | North | East | South |
|--------------|-------|------|-------|
| | | | Pass |
| 1 ♦ | Pass | 1 ♥ | Pass |
| 2 NT | Pass | 3 ♦ | Pass |
| 3 NT | Pass | Pass | Pass |
| 3 NT by West | | | |
| Lead: ♠ 5 | | | |

You are West and it is your bid. Decide what you would say, then on BID.

You have 19 points, too much for 1 NT. With two 4-card minors you should open 1 ♦, regardless of strength. Partner responds 1 ♥. What do you bid next?

Partner's ♥ bid makes you very happy. It also makes your rebid a snap. With 19 points and a balanced hand you jump to 2 NT.

Partner now surprises you a little by saying 3 ♦.

What is your next bid?

For partner to take you out of Notrump he must have a distributional hand, probably with a singleton or void in one of the black suits. You have to make the choice between passing, bidding 4 ♦ or 5 ♦, or bidding 3 NT.

While any of those choices might turn out best, the fact that most of your strength is in the black suits should help you decide on 3 NT.

West plays 3 NT. North leads the ♠ 5. South plays the ♠ 9.

Winner count: ♠ 2 : ♥ 0 : ♦ 2 : ♣ 4? : Total = 8?

Those 4 ♣ winners assume a 3-2 split. Since that is going to be the first suit you play you will find out soon enough.

You win the ♠ Q. Play the ♣ K, then the ♣ T (trying to tempt a cover). Go up with the ♣ Q and South follows with the ♣ J so you do have 4 ♣ tricks. Take your other two ♣s right now.

You are now at the crossroads. For your ninth trick should you try the ♦ finesse or should you establish a ♥. It's a no-brainer. If you finesse a ♦ and it loses to South's ♦ Q a ♠ will come back, knocking out your last stopper. Then, if the ♦s fail to split 3-2 you will be short one winner and it will be too late to set up the ♥. So ignore the finesse and set up a ♥ for your guaranteed nine tricks.

South would win and play a ♠, and whether you ducked this one or not your last stopper would soon be removed. When ♦s failed to split 3-2 you would have been forced to try a ♥. North would win his ♥ A and set you with ♠s.

Correctly played you would lead a ♥ honor to establish one trick in the suit and easily make the game with 2 ♠s, 1 ♥, 2 ♦s and 4 ♣s.