

Deal 1

South Deals
None Vul

♠ J 10 8 4
♥ K 7 5 3
♦ Q 10 9 3
♣ 8

♠ K 6 2
♥ A Q
♦ 5 4
♣ K Q J 9 7 2



♠ Q 9 5
♥ 10 9 8 4 2
♦ K 8
♣ 10 5 4

15
6 5
14

♠ A 7 3
♥ J 6
♦ A J 7 6 2
♣ A 6 3

| West | North | East | South |
|------|-------|------|-------|
|------|-------|------|-------|

| | | | |
|------|-----|------|------|
| Pass | 3 ♣ | Pass | 1 NT |
| Pass | 6 ♣ | Pass | 4 ♣ |
| Pass | | | Pass |

6 ♣ by North

Lead: ♥ 10

You are thinking slam; your first step is a jump to 3 ♣.

Partner says 4 ♣; what do you bid?

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Partner says 4 ♣; what do you bid?

With partner agreeing ♣s, one possibility would be for you to cue-bid your ♥ A. Another would be just to bid 6 ♣. You choose the second approach.

West plays low and you win the ♥ Q.

Your best chance at another winner is the ♦ suit. East MAY have both the ♦ K Q, if not you will have to establish the suit.

At trick 2 pull just one round of trumps with the ♣ K. Then play a small ♦, finessing the ♦ J when East plays low. West takes the ♦ Q and returns the ♠ J.

Go up with your ♠ K, you may need the entry to dummy later. Pull one more trump with the ♣ Q, then play a small ♦ to dummy's ♦ A. Ruff a ♦ with a high trump, East discarding.

Enter dummy with the ♣ A, pulling East's last trump as you do, and ruff one more ♦, establishing the fifth ♦. Enter dummy with the ♠ A and discard your losing ♠ on the good ♦.

If the suit splits evenly perhaps you can be a little sloppy and still get by.

But in cases like this one, with a 4-2 split, you cannot afford to waste an entry too early.

Deal 2

East Deals

None Vul

♠ A 10 5 2
♥ 8 6
♦ A K 3
♣ A 9 6 2

9
15 4
12

West

2 ♦

Pass

2 ♥ by East

Lead: ♠ Q

♠ K 7 4 3
♥ Q 10 9 4
♦ J 10
♣ K 10 7



♠ Q J 9 8
♥ K J
♦ Q 9 8 5
♣ Q J 3

North

Pass

Pass

East

1 NT

2 ♥

South

Pass

Pass

♠ 6
♥ A 7 5 3 2
♦ 7 6 4 2
♣ 8 5 4

This situation comes up a lot. You don't have enough points to advance partner's 1 NT opening, but you have a "long suit" that might play better than notrump. If "long suit" is 6 ♥s or 6 ♠s then pretty clearly you should transfer partner to that suit and then pass. But with only 5 of the Major it is tougher to say that 1 NT would be an inferior contract. Here's a suggestion - with fewer than 9 points and a 5-card Major, transfer to that suit when you have a singleton or void, otherwise pass 1 NT. So here you bid 2 ♦ and partner says 2 ♥.

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Of course you pass, that was the whole point of the transfer.

The contract would be 2 ♥ played by East.

To make West the declarer ROTATE.

West plays 2 ♥. North leads the ♠ Q, South playing the ♠ 7.

We will all agree that you win the first trick with your ♠ A.

In suit contracts it is usual to count losers. Sometimes in low level suit contracts it makes things clearer if you count winners. Here you have 4 high card winners in your hand plus the Ace of trumps in dummy.

Your plan will therefore be to make as many of dummy's small trumps as you can.

At trick 2 ruff a ♠ in dummy. Pull one trump with the ♥ A. Play a ♣ back to your ♣ A and ruff another ♠.

Got the idea? Play a ♦ to your ♦ K and ruff your last ♠ in dummy. Then play the ♦ A. If you've been counting you have taken the first 8 tricks. A good thing, too, because you aren't going to take any more.

Here is an example of when that principle is NOT correct; when you need to get several ruffs with small trumps.

Deal 3

South Deals
None Vul

♠ 8 5
♥ 10 4 2
♦ Q J 10 5
♣ Q 10 9 4

6
5 9
20

♠ A J 7 4
♥ J 9 6
♦ 6 2
♣ 7 5 3 2



♠ K 10 9 3
♥ A K Q 5
♦ A 8
♣ A 8 6

♠ Q 6 2
♥ 8 7 3
♦ K 9 7 4 3
♣ K J

| West | North | East | South |
|--------------|-------|------|-------|
| | | | 2 NT |
| Pass | 3 ♣ | Pass | 3 ♥ |
| Pass | 3 NT | Pass | 4 ♠ |
| Pass | Pass | Pass | |
| 4 ♠ by South | | | |
| Lead: ♦ Q | | | |

Partner's 3 ♣ bid is Stayman; with 4 cards in both Majors you respond 3 ♥. Partner now bids 3 NT. What do you bid?

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Partner would not use Stayman unless he held a 4-card Major suit himself. Since he didn't like your ♥s it follows that he must have 4 ♠s.

So you correct the 3 NT contract to 4 ♠.

If you had left it in 3 NT you'd have 8 top tricks and a ♠ finesse for 9.

But you're in 4 ♠.

If you can guess the ♠ Q your problems are over. But just in case you dislike those 50% guesses, try to find a better Plan.

Another possibility is that a defender holds either a singleton or doubleton ♠ Q so you can pick up the suit by leading ♠ A K. This is smaller than a

50% chance.

But there is more to the odds than that. Suppose you try the second possibility and play off both the ♠ A and ♠ K but the ♠ Q does NOT drop. You are still not dead! You just leave the ♠ Q out there and start on ♥s. As long as the defender who holds the ♠ Q has at least 3 ♥s he will be unable to ruff until after you have discarded dummy's ♦ loser.

The extra chance makes this Plan your best hope.

to see which plan works.

You could have gone down easily by playing West for the ♠ Q.

Or you could have made it whoever held the ♠ Q by using the "improved" plan.

Deal 4

South Deals

None Vul

♠ J 10 6

♥ K 10 9 6

♦ 8 7 5

♣ A 6 2

♠ 9 4 2

♥ A Q 8 7 4 2

♦ 6

♣ K 7 5



♠ K 8 7 3

♥ 5

♦ K Q 9 4 2

♣ 9 4 3

♠ A Q 5

♥ J 3

♦ A J 10 3

♣ Q J 10 8

8
9 8
15

*West**North**East**South*

2 ♥

Dbl

Pass

 1 NT
Pass

Pass

2 ♥× by West

Lead: ♠ J

Sometimes the opponents make overcalls which disrupt the smooth flow of your side's bidding. You and your partner need to have ways of dealing with these disruptions. One possibility is the lebensohl convention which is used a few times in these To Deals. There are lots of other methods out there, and you may not care for lebensohl. One of the big reasons we use it is that it includes a penalty double - some other methods use the double for other reasons.

So, in lebensohl an immediate double of their overcall of partner's 1 NT opener is for penalties. Just like this one - punish them if they dare try to disrupt your bidding!

To see all the hands

This is the only Deal like this out of the To.

No Declarer Plan for you to make, no tricks to look for.

Just play through the deal as you think it might go and see how many tricks you can set West. Enjoy.

Deal 5

North Deals
None Vul

♠ 10 7 4 2
♥ A 5 4 3
♦ J 4
♣ 10 8 2

16
5 3
16

| West | North | East | South |
|---------------|-------|------|-------|
| | 1 NT | Pass | 4 NT |
| Pass | 6 NT | Pass | Pass |
| Pass | | | |
| 6 NT by North | | | |
| Lead: ♥ J | | | |

♠ K Q J 8
♥ K Q
♦ A 6 5
♣ J 7 6 3



♠ A 6
♥ 9 7 2
♦ K 10 8 3
♣ A K Q 5

♠ 9 5 3
♥ J 10 8 6
♦ Q 9 7 2
♣ 9 4

Partner's 4 NT bid is not Blackwood, it is the Quantitative 4 NT. He is unsure whether to bid 6 NT or not, so is inviting you to do so.

With 15 points you are supposed to pass. With 17 points you are supposed to bid 6 NT. Wouldn't you know it, 16 points. Today you feel bold, so you say 6 NT.

West plays the ♥ A and returns the ♥ 3.

Winner List: ♠ = 4 : ♥ = 1 : ♦ = 2 : ♣ = 4 :: Total = 11

One trick is already lost and at first glance it looks like your only slim chance will be for the ♦ Q J to fall doubleton.

But a dummy has a very important card, the ♥ 9. You know from the opening lead that East holds the ♥ T, so if he happens to hold the only guard in ♦s you will be able to squeeze him in the red suits.

You don't even have to do anything special. Play your 4 ♣ winners, then 3 ♠ winners.

Now play the ♠ J and watch East's discard. If he throws the ♥ T dummy's ♥ 9 will become a winner. If he doesn't throw the ♥ T then you know dummy's ♥ 9 is worthless so discard it and hope the ♦s are good.

to see.

But not always. Sometimes they just happen, like this one. You were really hoping for the ♦ Q and ♦ J to fall and you fell into the squeeze instead.