

Deal 1

South Deals
None Vul

♠ K 5
♥ J 9 5 2
♦ A 8 6
♣ 9 7 6 3

9
8 7
16

West

Pass

Pass

4 ♠ by North

Lead: ♦ J

♠ Q J 9 8 7 3

♥ K Q 6

♦ 7 2

♣ J 4



♠ 6 4

♥ A 7 3

♦ K Q 5 4

♣ A K 8 2

North

4 ♠

East

Pass

South

1 NT

Pass

♠ A 10 2

♥ 10 8 4

♦ J 10 9 3

♣ Q 10 5

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

HE WHO KNOWS, GOES You KNOW your side has 26-28 points. You KNOW your side has 8 or more ♠s. You GO to 4 ♠.

North plays 4 ♠. East leads the ♦ J.

Losers: ♠ 2/3 : ♥ 0 : ♦ 1 : ♣ 0 : Total = 3/4

You are definitely going to lose the ♦ A and the ♠ A K. Therefore you must plan to avoid losing a third ♠.

You should lead UP TO your honor cards. Cover the ♦ J and lose to West's ♦ A. Win his return (probably another ♦) in dummy. Lead a small ♠ to your ♠ J. East wins with an honor and probably plays the ♦ T. Ruff it, lead a ♣ to dummy and lead the last ♠. If West plays the other high honor you play low. If West plays low you guess whether to play the ♠ K, or ♠ T. Your best play is to assume the two honors were split and play the ♠ Q.

Now for an alternate possible.

You might think that East is just as likely to have held an original doubleton ♠ A K as doubleton ♠ A T, and that playing the ♠ 9 would be as good a play as ♠ Q.

This is untrue for a very classy-named reason - The Principle of Restricted Choice. You may not even believe it when you read it, but it's mathematically sound. If East were dealt an original ♠ A K, he would have been just as likely to win with the ♠ K as with the ♠ A. The fact that he actually won the ♠ A makes it less likely that he also holds the ♠ K.

Deal 2

North Deals
None Vul

♠ K 9
♥ K Q 10 6
♦ 9 6 4
♣ 10 7 5 2

13
8 6
13

West	North	East	South
	1 ♦	Pass	1 ♠
Pass	2 ♠	Pass	4 ♠
Pass	Pass	Pass	

4 ♠ by South
Lead: ♥ K

♠ A J 5 2
♥ 8 5 4
♦ A K J 3
♣ 8 4



♠ Q 8 6 3
♥ 9 7 2
♦ Q 7
♣ A K Q 6

♠ 10 7 4
♥ A J 3
♦ 10 8 5 2
♣ J 9 3

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

A jump to 2 NT would not be a terrible bid. But it is more important to show your 4-card Major.

So you bid 1 ♠ instead. Partner raises to 2 ♠.

What do you bid next?

It's another case of HE WHO KNOWS, GOES. You know you have at least 26 points and 8 ♠s. Of course you trust that partner would not raise a suit you bid as responder with only 3 trumps. So you bid 4 ♠.

South plays 4 ♠. West leads the ♥ K. The defense takes the first three ♥ tricks, then switch to a ♣.

Losers: ♠ ? : ♥ 3 : ♦ 0 : ♣ 0 : Total = 3?

It kinda makes you wish you'd bid 2 NT after all doesn't it?

At least the picture is clear. Very clear. You have no wiggle room left so you must bring in the ♠s without losing a trick. So West MUST have the ♠ K. Therefore you assume West does hold the ♠ K.

Suppose you lead the ♠ Q. West will play his ♠ K and force you to play dummy's ♠ A. Then one of the defenders will win the third ♠ with the ♠ T or ♠ 9.

No, you only have one chance to make this contract - West must hold a doubleton ♠ K x. So you lead a SMALL ♠ from your hand and finesse dummy's ♠ J. Then play the ♠ A, dropping West's ♠ K, then pull the last trump with the ♠ Q.

Since you would only have one more honor you'd be bound to lose a trick.

Deal 3

North Deals
None Vul

♠ 5 3
♥ 10 7 6 4 2
♦ A 7 5
♣ 7 5 3

17
4 10
9

West

Pass

Pass

3 NT by North

Lead: ♠ Q

♠ K 6
♥ K 9 8
♦ K J 10 4
♣ A K 8 2



♠ A 7 2
♥ Q J 3
♦ Q 8 6 2
♣ 9 6 4

North

1 NT

3 NT

East

2 ♠

Pass

South

2 NT

Pass

♠ Q J 10 9 8 4
♥ A 5
♦ 9 3
♣ Q J 10

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

With 17 points and a balanced hand you naturally open 1 NT. East overcalls 2 ♠. Your partner then bids 2 NT.

Your partner invited you to bid 3 NT if you had 17 points, and you have 17 points. You trust your partner so you bid 3 NT.

North plays 3 NT. East leads the ♠ Q.

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

This looks scary. Needing 5 more tricks means you are going to have to establish BOTH red suits. And with only two ♠ stoppers you have to hope East doesn't have both red Aces. If he does, you're down, so just assume that he only has one of them. Now if you can just figure out which Ace East has you can establish that suit first.

But you don't have to guess, there is a better way. East overcalled at the 2-level with a Queen-high

suit and one outside Ace. THAT is bold. Surely he has at least a 6-card suit to justify that overcall. If so, then a simple hold-up will be worthwhile. So you let East hold the first trick, and when he leads another ♠ you win the ♠ K in your hand. If East has a 6-card suit West is now void of ♠s.

Play ♦s to drive out the ♦ A. If West has it he will not have another ♠ to force you with. If East has it he can force out your last ♠, but then won't have the ♥ A for an entry. However the Aces are split - as long as East doesn't have both - you will establish 9 tricks.

With the holdup it didn't matter which red suit you established first.

Deal 4

South Deals

None Vul

♠ 10 9 7 3

♥ A K 8 4

♦ 10 8

♣ A 10 3

8

11 12

9

West

Pass

2 ♠ by South

Lead: ♥ A

♠ K Q J 8 6 2

♥ 5

♦ Q 6 4

♣ 9 7 2



♠ 5 4

♥ 10 9 6 3

♦ A K 9 2

♣ Q 8 5

North

Pass

East

Pass

South

2 ♠

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

Don't even think twice. Just pass and wonder why the opponents aren't bidding.

South would play 2 ♠.

North plays 2 ♠. East leads ♥ A, then ♥ K.

Losers: ♠ 1/2 : ♥ 1 : ♦ 0 : ♣ 3 : Total = 5/6

If East has both ♣ A and ♣ K you could save yourself 1 ♣ loser, but the odds are about 3 to 1 against that. Your best chance of making this contract is just to hold your ♠ losers to 1. With an expected 3-2 split there will not be a problem, but you might as well take extra pains if you can do so without risk.

So after you ruff the ♥ K you do NOT play the ♠ K. Instead you play a ♦ to dummy and lead a ♠ toward your honors. Your extra pains pay off when West plays the ♠ A, which was a singleton.

It costs nothing to make a careful play. Most of the time it doesn't matter, but every now and again it pays off in a contract that couldn't be made without the careful play.

Deal 5

North Deals

None Vul

♠ 4 2

♥ K Q 10

♦ A J 7 5 3

♣ Q 8 7

9
12 11
8

West

Pass

3 ♥ by North

Lead: ♠ Q

♠ A K 9 8 6 5 3

♥ 6 2

♦ Q 4

♣ 5 2



♠ 7

♥ A J 9 8 7 5 4

♦ 8

♣ K 10 6 3

North

3 ♥

East

Pass

South

Pass

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

You really really want to say 3 ♠. Here are three good reasons you shouldn't.

You have 9 ♥s between you. You may have only 7 ♠s. If you bid 3 ♠ partner may bid again. You haven't been doubled.

North would play 3 ♥.

South plays 3 ♥. West leads the ♠ Q.

It turns out there was a fourth reason not to bid 3 ♠ - the opponents might lead the suit.

Losers: ♠ 0 : ♥ 1/2 : ♦ 1 : ♣ 4 : Total = 6/7

The ♠ lead is about the best thing that could have happened to you. You win with dummy's ♠ A and play ♠ K, discarding your ♦. You then lead a small ♣, covering anything East plays. You'd like to ruff a ♣ if you can, but if they play trumps to stop you

then you'd like the trump play to come from West. West leads the ♥ 3, East plays the ♥ K, and you win with the ♥ A. You play a small ♣. If the defender who wins the ♣ doesn't play another trump then you can ruff your third ♣ in dummy. If the defender DOES play a trump, then you lose only one trump trick. You end up going down 1, which is pretty good.