

**Deal 1**      ♠ —  
 South Deals    ♥ 10 9 6  
 None Vul      ♦ K Q J 10 3  
 ♣ A 8 7 4 2

♠ Q J 10 7 3      ♠ A 9 8  
 ♥ J 3              ♥ Q 5 2  
 ♦ 8 6 2            ♦ 9 7 5 4  
 ♣ J 9 5            ♣ Q 10 6

N  
W E  
S

10  
5 8  
17

♠ K 6 5 4 2  
♥ A K 8 7 4  
♦ A  
♣ K 3

West	North	East	South
			1 ♠
Pass	2 ♦	Pass	3 ♥
Pass	4 ♥	Pass	4 NT
Pass	6 ♥	Pass	Pass
Pass			
6 ♥ by South			
Lead: ♠ Q			

North's 6 ♥ response to Blackwood showed one Ace and a ♠ void. South is to play 6 ♥. West leads the ♠ Q.

Losers: ♠ = ??    ♥ = 1    ♦ = 0    ♣ = 0  
 Total = 1 ??

Of course you ruff the ♠ in dummy. West wouldn't underlead an Ace at a slam contract, and since you have a certain trump loser you cannot afford to lose a trick to East's ♠ A.

Dummy has some great ♦s, but you can't expect to run them unless you have pulled all the trumps. But if you play ♥ A K 4 the defenders will take their trump trick and immediately set the contract with the ♠ A. There IS a way around the problem.

First off, you must get a 3-2 split in trumps because if they don't split 3-2 you will have two trump losers. So you assume that they are split just like you need them to be.

At trick two you duck a trump. That's right, you lose a trump trick early. Since you have to lose a trump sometime, you do it at a time when the defenders can't hurt you. So a defender wins the trump trick, but now a ♠ play won't hurt because dummy still has a trump to ruff with! In fact, whatever they play next you will win, pull the outstanding trumps, then run dummy's ♦ suit.

for the full deal.

When you have a trump loser but still need to pull their trumps, it may be better for you to lose an early trump trick rather than a later one.

**Deal 2**

North Deals

None Vul

**♠ J 10 9 8 3****♥ 6****♦ K J 9 7 4****♣ J 10****♠ A K Q****♥ A K 9 8****♦ A 10 8 6 3****♣ 5**

**♠ 6 5**  
**♥ 5 4 3 2**  
**♦ Q 2**  
**♣ K Q 9 7 3**

**20**  
**6 7**  
**7**  
**♠ 7 4 2**  
**♥ Q J 10 7**  
**♦ 5**  
**♣ A 8 6 4 2**

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
	1 ♦	Pass	1 ♥
Pass	4 NT	Pass	5 ♦
Pass	6 ♥	Pass	Pass

6 ♥ by South

Lead: ♠ J

Agreed that the bidding wasn't much. The final contract is still a good one. South is to play 6 ♥. West leads the ♠ J.

Losers: ♠=0 ♥=0 ♦=0 ♣=4 Total = 4

There really aren't 4 ♣ losers since they can be ruffed in dummy. In fact you should see that this is an ideal cross-ruff hand, ruffing ♣s in dummy and ♦s in your hand. Since neither hand can be over-ruffed you expect to make all 8 trumps.

Remember, when playing a cross ruff, you need to take any side suit winners first, otherwise a defender may be able to discard that suit while you are ruffing. So you win the ♠ A, then take the ♠ K, then . . . what?

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Well, if you win the ♠ Q, then the two Minor suit Aces, you'd be set up to cross-ruff the hand out for all 13 tricks. But here's what might happen if you try.

East might ruff the ♠ Q. OK, no disaster yet. But he might then play a trump. Your slam is now kaput. You can no longer make 8 trump tricks and will end up down 1.

The answer is to not be greedy for that overtrick. With West's opening ♠ lead there is an indication of possible length there. So, realizing that East could be short in the suit, take just the 2 ♠ tricks that you need for the slam, then play your Minor Aces and start the cross-ruff.

Don't jeopardize your contract trying to take too many.