

Deal 1
North Deals
None Vul

♠ 10 9 5 4
♥ K J 10 3
♦ 9 7 4
♣ 6 2

21
4 6
9

♠ —
♥ A 5 2
♦ A K 6
♣ A K Q J 7 5 4

♠ J 8 6 2
♥ Q 9 8
♦ Q J 10 2
♣ 10 3

West North East South
Pass 3 ♠ Pass 3 NT
Pass 6 ♠ Pass Pass
Pass
6 ♠ by North
Lead: ♦ Q

but the chances are very slim.

You can play a low ♣ to dummy's ♣ 8. Assuming a defender takes the ♣ T you can win his return and enter dummy with the ♣ 9. This play is guaranteed to give you the entry and is the one you should choose.

When you are missing 4 cards the probability of a 3-1 split is about 50%.

But the singleton can be any one of four cards - in this case it can be the ♣ T, ♣ 6, ♣ 3 or ♣ 2. So the chance of one of the opponents holding specifically the singleton ♣ T is only one-fourth of 50%, about 12.5%.

North is to play 6 ♣. East leads the ♦ Q.

Losers: ♠=0 ♥=2 ♦=1 ♣=0 Total = 3

Partner's hand didn't turn out to be what you hoped for, you had in mind maybe the ♥ K and ♦ Q.

But this is what you got. First, be thankful East led a ♦ rather than a ♥. Second, see if you can find a way to fight yourself over to dummy and those three beautiful ♣s.

You have two possibilities for a ♣ entry, but you can only try one of them as you will see.

You can play a high ♣ and hope somebody plays the singleton ♣ T. Then your ♣ 9 would be an entry. If this works you would probably make all 13 tricks,

Deal 2
South Deals
None Vul

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

W N E
S ♠ Q 10 6 5 2
 ♦ 6 5 2
 ♦ A Q 7
 ♣ 9 4

 ♠ 8 3
 ♦ A K J 9 8 7
 ♦ K 10 4 3
 ♣ A

8
9 8
15

West North East South
Pass 2 ♣ Pass 1 ♥
Pass 4 ♥ Pass 3 ♥
Pass
4 ♥ by South
Lead: ♠ A

South is to play 4 ♥. West leads the ♠ A, then ♠ K.

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

This is the kind of hand that can get really messy if you aren't careful. You could ruff the ♠, then try to ruff some ♦s, but the defense can prevent you by leading trumps when you give up the ♦ tricks.

All in all a much better plan is to use dummy's ♣ suit after you unblock the Ace. The only flaw with that idea is that when you ruff the ♠, unblock the ♣ A, then play two rounds of trumps ending in dummy, there will still be a trump left out. And the defender might ruff a ♣ before you can take the discards you need. Do you see a way around this?

Do NOT ruff the second ♠ in dummy, just discard a ♦. If West plays a third ♠ you will ruff in your hand, then unblock the ♣ A, then pull trumps in 3 rounds ending in dummy. And run all those ♣ tricks. If West plays a trump or a ♣ the result will be the same. The defense can get one ♦ trick if they take it right now, but you still make your contract.

Deal 3
North Deals
None Vul

♠ K J 9
♥ 10 9 8 2
♦ K 9 3
♣ A 8 4

21
11 3
5

N
W E
S

♠ Q 7 4
♥ J 5 3
♦ 6 5 4 2
♣ Q 10 7

West North East South
Pass Pass Pass 3 NT
3 NT by North
Lead: ♣ 3

♠ A 8 2
♥ A K 6
♦ A Q J 7
♣ K 6 2

♠ 10 6 5 3
♥ Q 7 4
♦ 10 8
♣ J 9 5 3

North is to play 3 NT. East leads the ♣ 3, West plays the ♣ A.

Winners: ♠=1 ♥=2 ♦=1 ♣=2 Total = 6

You have the possibility of one additional ♠ winner if East holds the ♠ K. However, ♦s is your best suit and if West holds the ♦ K you could gain all three winners that you need from that suit. But of course you need perhaps 2 dummy entries. Do you have them?

Well, you probably do. East's small ♣ lead probably indicates an honor, and with West playing the ♣ A you can be pretty sure that East holds the ♣ J. So by playing your ♣ K underneath the ♣ A you set up a second entry to dummy via the ♣ finesse.

Assume West now plays a ♥. Take your ♥ A and play a ♣ to dummy's ♣ T. Lead a ♦ and finesse the ♦ J, which holds. Play another ♣ to dummy and finesse another ♦. Now play your ♦ A and smile when the ♦ K drops and your fourth ♦ becomes a winner.

By unblocking the ♣ K you were still pretty confident that you would get the two tricks, but the bonus was in the extra dummy entry your unblock created.

Deal 4
South Deals
None Vul

♠ Q J
♥ A Q 6
♦ 8 4
♣ Q J 9 8 5 3
♠ 7 5 2
♥ 10 8 5 3
♦ A J 9 5 2
♣ 6
12
5 9
14
♠ K 10 9 8 3
♥ K J
♦ K 7 3
♣ A 10 2

N
W E
S

♠ A 6 4
♥ 9 7 4 2
♦ Q 10 6
♣ K 7 4

West North East South
Pass 2 ♣ Pass 1 ♠
Pass 3 NT Pass 2 NT
Pass

3 NT by South
Lead: ♦ 5

South is to play 3 NT. West leads the ♦ 5, East plays the ♦ Q.

Winners: ♠=0 ♥=3 ♦=1 ♣=1 Total = 5

You must take the ♦ K right now or you might lose the first 5 tricks.

It's a shame about that solid ♠ suit, but if you try to win even a single ♠ they will grab the ♠ A and win enough ♦ tricks to set the contract.

So you are going to have to win a lot of ♣ tricks, and do so without losing the lead. You need dummy entries, and they must be in ♥s.

Win the ♦ K. Play the ♥ J to dummy's ♥ Q. Play the ♣ Q and when East follows with a low card let it ride. Still in dummy, play the ♣ J, again letting it ride when East

plays low. Play one more ♣ to your ♣ A, picking up East's ♣ K this time.

The ♣ suit is ready to run, so play your ♥ K to dummy's ♥ A and take your ♣ winners. You took 9 tricks in all, the ♦ K, the ♥ A Q and all 6 ♣s.

Since it gave you all 6 ♣ tricks the sacrifice was well worth it.