Deal 1
North Deals
None Vul

♠ A K 6
♡ A
◇ A K J 5 3 2
♣ Q J 2

♠ 8 5 3
♡ 8 6 5 2
◇ Q 9 7
♣ A 10 5

N
W E
S

♠ Q J 10 9 7 2
♡ 9 7 4
◇ 8
♣ K 9 3

22
6 6
6

♠ 4
♡ K Q J 10 3
◇ 10 6 4
♣ 8 7 6 4

West	North	East	South
	2 ♣	Pass	2 ◇
Pass	3 ◇	Pass	3 ♡
Pass	3 NT	Pass	Pass
Pass			

3 NT by North
Lead: ♠ Q

North is to play 3 NT. East leads the ♠ Q.

Winners: ♠=2 ♡=1 ◇=2 ♣=0 Total = 5

There they are, four perfectly good ♡ tricks and no straightforward way to reach them. On the other hand, (I should say "In the other hand"), you have the possibility of 6 ◇ tricks, if the ◇ Q drops, in which case you won't need the ♡ tricks at all. Can you work those two possibilities into a strategy?

Sure. The ◇ problem is that the outstanding ◇s may split 3-1 with one defender holding ◇ Q x x. So it would appear you could only get 5 ◇ winners. But you can thwart him like this.

Win the ♠. Unblock the ♡ A. Now play the ◇ J. If Mr. ◇ Q x x takes this trick dummy's ◇T will become an entry to those wonderful ♡s. But if he cleverly refuses to win the ◇ Q, then it will fall under your ◇ A K and you will get all 6 ◇ tricks.

Maybe after the hand is over he will appreciate it more and congratulate you.

Deal 2
West Deals
None Vul

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            ♠ A 6 2
            ♡ Q J 9 4
            ◇ 10 3
            ♣ 9 7 6 2
♠ K                         ♠ Q J 10 9 3
♡ A K 7 5 3      N          ♡ 6 2
◇ A K Q 6     W     E       ◇ 8 5 4
♣ K 10 5         S          ♣ A J 3
            ♠ 8 7 5 4
    7       ♡ 10 8
 22   8     ◇ J 9 7 2
    3       ♣ Q 8 4
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West	North	East	South
2 ♣	Pass	2 ♠	Pass
3 ♡	Pass	3 NT	Pass
Pass	Pass		

3 NT by East
Lead: ◇ 2

East is to play 3 NT. South leads the ◇ 2.

Winners: ♠=1 ♡=2 ◇=3 ♣=2 Total = 8

The reason the Winners list shows 1 ♠ is that the defenders are going to have to let you win dummy's ♠ K. If they take that then you'll have 4 ♠ winners in your hand!

So you only need one more winner really, and if you guess the ♣ finesse right you will have it. Which way will you finesse, and why?

You will finesse through North. If he has the ♣ Q you will win all 3 ♣ tricks, but if South has the ♣ Q you may win even more. Just watch.

Win the opening ◇ lead in dummy. Play the ♠ K which the defenders are not about to take while you have a ♣ entry to your hand. Now play the ♣T and pass it to South. If South takes the ♣ Q then you will have TWO entries to your hand, one to get there for a ♠ lead, and the other to reach the ♠ winners after you have driven out the ♠ A. But if South DOESN'T take the ♣ Q, or if North actually has it, then you will have 3 ♣ tricks and your contract.

Deal 3
South Deals
None Vul

♠ Q 6
♡ A Q J 8 4
♦ 7 5 3
♣ 6 4 2

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

               ♠ A K
   9   ♡ K 10 3
 4 5   ♦ A K 8 6
  22   ♣ A J 10 9

West	North	East	South
			2 ♣
Pass	2 ♡	Pass	2 NT
Pass	6 NT	Pass	Pass
Pass			

6 NT by South
Lead: ♠ 10

South is to play 6 NT. West leads the ♠T.

Winners: ♠ = 2   ♡ = 5   ♦ = 2   ♣ = 1
Total = T

You need two more winners and the best bet is to try to pick up three ♣ tricks. You will need the ♣ K and ♣ Q to lie in different hands, or both of them to be with East. That is about a 75% chance.

But you may need to make 3 finesses, so that means 3 entries to dummy, all of which must be in the ♡ suit. Can it be done?

Of course it can. Win the ♠ lead in your hand and play the ♡ K, overtaking with dummy's ♡ A. Now play a ♣ to your ♣ 9, which loses to West's ♣ K. West plays another ♠.

Now play the ♡T, and when West follows you are safe to overtake with dummy's ♡ J since you can tell that East did not start with 4 ♡s. In fact, East shows out so it is West who started with 4 ♡s but that won't be a problem for you. Play another ♣ from dummy, finessing the ♣T which wins.

Now play your ♡ 3 toward dummy, finessing the ♡ 8 when West follows with a low card. Play dummy's two ♡ winners, discarding ♦s, then the low ♣ to your ♣ J. Wow.

And as you have figured by now, assessing how many entries you are going to need is big part of that plan. Like here, if you had won a single ♡ trick in your hand then you wouldn't have had the three entries to dummy.

Deal 4

West Deals

None Vul

	♠ 10 4		
	♡ J 9 2		
	♦ Q J 10 3		
	♣ 10 8 6 2		
♠ A K Q J 9 7		♠ 8	
♡ —	N	♡ A K 8 6 5 4 3	
♦ A K 6 2	W E	♦ 8 5 4	
♣ A J 5	S	♣ Q 3	
	♠ 6 5 3 2		
	♡ Q 10 7		
	♦ 9 7		
	♣ K 9 7 4		

West	North	East	South
2 ♣	Pass	2 ♡	Pass
2 ♠	Pass	3 ♡	Pass
6 ♠	Pass	Pass	Pass

6 ♠ by West

Lead: ♦ Q

Pretty bold bidding by West, but partner DID make a positive response. West is to play 6 ♠. North leads the ♦ Q.

Losers: ♠=0 ♡=0 ♦=2 ♣=1 Total = 3

OK, the plan is to get over to dummy for those two ♡ winners.

If you just play a small ♣ toward the ♣ Q that will work whenever North holds the ♣ K.

How about playing ♣ A an a small ♣, planning on ruffing your third ♣ to get to dummy? Naaah. They will win the second ♣ and play a trump.

There is actually a play that is 10% certain, no matter who holds the ♣ K.

Win the opening lead and lay down your ♣ J. The defense is helpless. If they take the ♣ J with the ♣ K, then you have a dummy entry in the form of the ♣ Q. If they refuse to take the trick you will counter by next laying down the ♣ A, then ruffing a third ♣ to get to dummy and the two golden eggs.

My dream is that someday I will get a chance to use it at the table. If you ever do be sure and email me.