

Deal 1

North Deals	♠ K 10 9 3
None Vul	♥ A K Q 5
	♦ A 8
	♣ A 8 6

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



20	♠ A J 7 4
9 5	♥ J 9 6
6	♦ 6 2

♣ 7 5 3 2

West	North	East	South
	2 NT	Pass	3 ♣

Pass	3 ♥	Pass	3 NT
Pass	4 ♣	Pass	Pass

Pass
4 ♣ by North
Lead: ♦ Q

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 East for the ♠ Q.

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

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

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

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

Deal 2

North Deals

None Vul

♠ K 8 7 3**♥ 5****♦ K Q 9 4 2****♣ 9 4 3****15
8 9
8****♠ A Q 5****♥ J 3****♦ A J 10 3****♣ Q J 10 8**

W	N	E	S
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♠ 9 4 2**♥ A Q 8 7 4 2****♦ 6****♣ K 7 5****♠ J 10 6
♥ K 10 9 6
♦ 8 7 5
♣ A 6 2***West**North**East**South*

1 NT

2 ♥

Dbl

Pass

Pass

Pass

2 ♥× by East

Lead: ♠ J

and see how many tricks you can set East. Enjoy.

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

Deal 3

South Deals
None Vul

♠ 9 5 3
♥ J 10 8 6
♦ Q 9 7 2
♣ 9 4

16
3 5
16

West
Pass
Pass
6 NT by South
Lead: ♥J

♠ A 6
♥ 9 7 2
♦ K 10 8 3
♣ A K Q 5

N
W E
S

♠ 10 7 4 2
♥ A 5 4 3
♦ J 4
♣ 10 8 2

♠ K Q J 8
♥ K Q
♦ A 6 5
♣ J 7 6 3

North *East* *South*
4 NT Pass 1 NT

Pass 6 NT

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.

East 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 West 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 West'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.

Deal 4

East Deals

None Vul

♠ 8 5 2
♥ Q 9 8 6 2
♦ K Q 6
♣ A 8

3
11 16
10

W	N	E	S

♠ Q 7 3
♥ A 10 5 3
♦ A J 7
♣ K Q 9

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

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>

3 ♥ Pass **4 ♥** Pass

Pass

4 ♥ by West

Lead: ♠ 10

When partner opens 1 NT, interference can easily gum up your smooth bidding sequences. Playing the lebensohl convention, your 3 ♥ bid shows a 5-card suit and is forcing to game.

It doesn't always work out so well, but here partner had an easy 4 ♥ bid.

Whatever you play, South takes the ♠ A K J and then plays a small ♣. North started with just one ♠.

Don't let that Question Mark by the ♥ losers mislead you - if you are going to make this contract you cannot lose a ♥ trick at all! Is there any hope?

The odds aren't good, but you actually have TWO possibilities for success. If North holds the singleton ♥ K, you can play a small ♥ to dummy's ♥ A, dropping the ♥ K, then finesse South out of his ♥ J. Or, if South holds the singleton ♥ J you can play your ♥ Q, finessing North for the ♥ K and at the same time smothering South's ♥ J.

Which basket will you put your eggs into?

The answer is simple Bridge math! South started with 6 ♠s leaving him 7 cards outside the ♠ suit. North started with just 1 ♠, leaving him with 12 cards outside the ♠ suit. Obviously South is much more likely to have a singleton ♥ than North.

So you win the ♣ A in your hand, play the ♥ Q and let it ride if North does not cover.

Then you to see how things turned out.

But to tell the truth, the Bridge math wasn't really complete. Distribution-wise it was just fine, but there is also the question of strength.

The fact that South overcalled makes it more likely that he holds more high cards than North, and this skews the odds toward South holding the ♥ K.

But think about it. If South does in fact hold the singleton ♥ K, and if you cleverly drop it by playing dummy's ♥ A it won't help you. You will then have to lose a trick to North's ♥ J.

Deal 5North Deals
None Vul

♠ 9 7 3
♥ Q J 10 9
♦ 9 4 2
♣ Q 5 3

¹⁷
5 8
10



♠ K J 4 2
♥ K 5
♦ A K 6
♣ K 9 7 4

♠ 10 8 5
♥ A 6 2
♦ Q J 10 7 5
♣ J 6

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
	1 NT	Pass	2 ♣
Pass	2 ♠	Pass	2 NT
Pass	3 NT	Pass	Pass
Pass			
3 NT by North			
Lead: ♦ Q			

In response to partner's Stayman bid you show your 4-card ♠ suit. Partner now bids 2 NT. What do you say?

In response to partner's Stayman bid you show your 4-card ♠ suit. Partner now bids 2 NT. What do you say?

Partner had ♥s, not ♠s. His 2 NT bid is invitational, 9-10 points, so with 17 points you say 3 NT.

You need one more winner. Although the ♥ K is a possibility, there is a real danger of losing 4 tricks in the suit if East holds the ♥ A.

A much better idea is to try to establish a ♣ trick, a suit where you hold 8 cards.

You must give up one ♣ trick in order to establish a winner there. It is important that you give up that ♣ trick to East. West is the Danger hand because if he wins a ♣ he might lead through your precarious ♥ K. So win the first trick, enter dummy with a ♠ honor, and play a small ♣, finessing the ♣ 9 when West plays low.

East wins the ♣ J, but you win the game. East cannot profitably play ♦s, so he will probably continue with another ♦. But since the ♣ Q will now drop under the ♣ A K you have your ninth trick.

The key is your ability to choose which defender you want to duck the trick into.

Deal 6East Deals
None Vul

♠ A 4 3
♥ K 7 3
♦ K Q 2
♣ A 10 7 2

6
16 12
6

♠ 10 5
♥ A J 9 6 2
♦ 10 7 5 4
♣ J 8

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
		1 NT	Pass
2 ♣	Pass	2 ♦	Pass
3 NT	Pass	Pass	Pass
3 NT by East			
Lead: ♥ 6			

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

With 12 points and a 4-card Major suit you automatically use Stayman; bid 2 ♣. Partner responds 2 ♦.

With 12 points and a 4-card Major suit you automatically use Stayman; bid 2 ♣. Partner responds 2 ♦.

You have plenty of points for game; with no 4-4 Major suit fit you bid 3 NT.

The contract would be 3 NT played by East.

To make West the declarer ROTATE.

West plays 3 NT. North leads the ♥ 6.

First big decision. Which ♥ do you play from dummy?

The Rule of Eleven tells you there are 5 ♥s in East, South and West which are higher than the ♥ 6. You and dummy hold 4 of them so you can place South with just 1. The missing high cards are ♥ A J T 9. Elementary, Watson; South must hold the

♥T because from ♥ A J T 6, ♥ A T 9 6 or ♥ J T 9 6 North would NOT have led the ♥ 6. So your first smart move is to play dummy's ♥ Q, which holds the trick. What next?

You need to find one more winner and your best chance is the ♣ suit. You will need a 3-2 split in the suit, but you must establish the ♣ winner without letting South get the lead. South is the Danger Hand because he can play a ♥ through your ♥ K 7. Therefore it would be unwise to play ♣ A, ♣ K, then another ♣ because South is very likely to be the one with 3 ♣s.

Did you get it? Play a small ♣ toward your hand and put on the ♣T if South plays low. You don't expect the ♣T to win the trick, it is more of a duck than a finesse. North takes this with his ♣ J but he can do you no harm. If he continues with ♥s your ♥ K will be a second stopper. If he plays any other suit you will scamper home with your 9 tricks, which of course now include those 3 ♣s.

But what if South had figured out what you were going to try and played his ♣ Q when you led from dummy?

He would have been very, very sorry. You would have had no choice but to win the trick, and when North's ♣ J fell on the next trick you would have all 4 ♣ tricks!