

Deal 1
North Deals
None Vul

♠ Q J 10 4 2
♥ 10
♦ A 9 5 4 3
♣ 7 6

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

N
W E
S

9
7 9
15

♠ A K 3
♥ A 7 6 4
♦ 8 6 2
♣ K J 3

West	North	East	South
	1 NT	Pass	2 ♣
Pass	2 ♥	Pass	4 ♥
Pass	Pass	Pass	

4 ♥ by North

Lead: ♦ K

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Again, never mind the ♣ suit. You have an 8-card Major fit and enough points for game, so you bid 4 ♥.

The contract would be 4 ♥ played by North.

To make South the declarer ROTATE.

South plays 4 ♥. West leads the ♦ K. The ♦ K holds the trick and West switches to the ♠ 9.

This looks like a walk in the park. Play 2 rounds of trumps, and if they split 3-2 go ahead and force the master trump out. The rest of the tricks would then be yours.

But East shows out on the second trump lead. Ouch!

DO NOT PLAY ANOTHER TRUMP! If you do, then West will pull all the trumps and then East/West will win some ♦s. Many, many ♦s.

Instead just start playing good ♣s. West can ruff in whenever he wants but you will maintain trump control. West can get both master trumps but nothing else.

Here that principle applied even though there were TWO master trumps out.

Deal 2East Deals
None Vul

♠ A J 6
♥ K 8 4
♦ A K 6
♣ 7 5 4 2

5
15 12
8

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
		1 NT	Pass
3 NT	Pass	Pass	Pass

3 NT by East
Lead: ♠ 10

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



With 12 points and no 4-card Major suit this one is easy. You bid 3 NT of course.

The contract would be 3 NT played by East.

To make West the declarer ROTATE.

West plays 3 NT. North leads the ♠T and South follows with the ♣2.

There is just no way your ninth winner can come from ♠s, ♥s, or ♦s. So by process of elimination you have to get a ♣ trick.

Win the first trick, probably in your hand, and play a ♣.

A defender will definitely win this, and probably continue ♠s (but if they switch you would play the same way). You win the ♣ and play another ♣.

North wins and plays another ♠; you win and play another ♣. Deja vu.

North wins again, cashed his established ♠, and exits with a red card. You win and claim the rest of the tricks, including your now-established ♣.

And you did it without going down because the ♠s split 4-3.

This may seem lucky to you, but don't knock it, it was your ONLY chance.

Deal 3	♠ A Q 5		
South Deals	♥ Q 10 9 3		
None Vul	♦ A J 10 7		
	♣ A 8		
♠ K 8 3	♠ 10 9 7 4		
♥ 5	♥ 8 7		
♦ Q 9 6 4 2	♦ 8 5 3		
♣ 10 9 7 3	♣ K Q 5 2		
	♠ J 6 2		
17 5 5 13	♥ A K J 6 4 2 ♦ K ♣ J 6 4		
West	North	East	South
			1 NT
Pass	2 ♦	Pass	3 ♥
Pass	4 NT	Pass	5 ♠
Pass	6 ♥	ALL	Pass
6 ♥ by South			
Lead: ♣ 10			

Your partnership may play that a jump to 3 ♥ shows a 6-card suit with slam interest, in other words, this very hand. If you do, then bid it. If you don't, use a transfer first. Let's say you bid 2 ♦. Partner jumps to 3 ♥. Now what do you bid?

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You might just go ahead and bid 6 ♥. Partner probably has at least two Aces for his strong bidding. The other choice is a Blackwood 4 NT, and this is certainly not the type of hand where asking for Aces is always helpful - what if partner shows two Aces, aren't you going to bid the slam anyway? The advantage to Blackwood here is that there is just a slim possibility that partner has only one Ace!

You bid 4 NT and partner replies 5 ♠. Next?

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The contract would be 6 ♥ played by South.

To make North the declarer ROTATE.

North plays 6 ♥. East leads the ♣ T. You play the ♣ J, just in case East made a mistake, but West puts on the ♣ Q which you take with your ♣ A.

The ♠ loser is deceptive. You could discard a ♠ from dummy on your ♦ A, but would still have a ♠ loser if the finesse doesn't work. Still, this would be one possible plan. Can you improve on that?

Maybe you can. Look harder at the ♦ s. Win the ♣ A, then play to dummy's ♦ K. Pull trumps (2 rounds) ending in your hand. Play your ♦ A, but discard a ♠ from dummy, (the key play). Now play your ♦ J, and if East plays low, discard dummy's other ♠.

You have gotten rid of the ♠ losers, but if West can win the ♦ Q on this trick you will discard a ♠ on the ♦ T, but will still have to try the ♠ finesse.

But, if the ♦ J holds then it won't matter if the ♠ finesse works or not, you will make the slam.

No problem. You ruff in dummy, come back to your hand with a trump and THEN discard dummy's last ♠ on your ♦ T.

You can try the ♠ finesse then, but you will make the slam whether it works or not.

Deal 4
 South Deals
 None Vul

♠ K 6 3
 ♥ 7 4 2
 ♦ Q 10 9
 ♣ 8 5 4 2

6
 5 15
 14

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
1 NT	Pass	Pass	Pass
1 NT by West			
Lead: ♥ J			

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

♠ Q 9 5
 ♥ K Q 8 6 3
 ♦ K 6 2
 ♣ A 3

♠ A J 2
 ♥ A 10 5
 ♦ A J 7
 ♣ J 9 7 6

N

W E S

With no reason to think you could improve the contract you just pass.

The contract would be 1 NT played by West.

To make East the declarer ROTATE.

East plays 1 NT. South leads the ♥ J and North plays the ♥ 8. Do you hold up? If so, how many times?

It probably makes no difference whether you hold up or not since North surely has most of the high cards. However, holding up once is a good idea because South may have a singleton ♥ and have to switch to something which helps you. South holds the first trick and plays another ♥, which you win.

You must find 4 winners. The bad news is that you must finesse both the ♦ K and the ♠ Q. The good news is that with North opening the bidding there is a good chance he has both of them. So, how will you manage those two finesses?

There is only one way to do it. Enter dummy with the only entry, the ♠ K. Take the ♦ finesse first - play the ♦ Q and unblock your ♦ J when North plays low. (you could play the ♦T/♦ 7 combination first).

Finesse the ♦ again. If North ducks a second time you must now take the ♠ finesse while you are still in dummy. If North covers the second ♦ you win with your ♦ A, return to dummy with the ♦ 9, and then finesse the ♠.

And you have to be careful to unblock so you don't inadvertently lose your place in dummy too soon.

Deal 5

North Deals
None Vul

♠ Q 9 8 2
♥ 5 3 2
♦ A 9
♣ 8 7 6 4

¹⁷
6 7
10

N
W E
S

♠ A 7 5 3
♥ K 6
♦ Q J 5 2
♣ 10 9 3

West	North	East	South
	1 NT	Pass	2 ♣
Pass	2 ♦	Pass	2 NT
Pass	3 NT	Pass	Pass
Pass			
3 NT by North			
Lead: ♥ Q			

With no 4-card Major suit you respond 2 ♦ to partner's Stayman bid. Partner now bids 2 NT. What do you say?

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With 17 points you naturally accept partner's invitation and bid 3 NT.

East's ♥ Q lead presents you with an immediate decision (or two) to make.

You need 4 additional winners and can only establish 3 of them in ♦s. So you will have to manufacture another one from the ♣ suit as well. If you assume the ♣ finesse will fail, (and you have probably noticed that most finesses DO fail on these pages), that means you will lose the lead twice.

So what do you do about that ♥ Q? Do you win or hold up?

You hold up, of course, to cut defensive communications when East has 5 ♥s and West has 3. East will probably play another ♥ to dummy's ♥ K.

If both the ♦ A and ♣ K are in East's hand then you won't make this contract. He will easily establish his ♥s and have an entry to get in and cash them. If the ♦ A is with East and the ♣ K is with West then it doesn't matter in which order you play the suits since you will not lose the lead in ♣s. But if the ♣ K is with East and the ♦ A is with West then it is vital that you play ♣s first.

But, if you finesse in ♣s first, East can win and establish the ♥ suit. But, when West wins the ♦ A, he will have no ♥ to return.

Deal 6
 East Deals
 None Vul
 ♠ J 5
 ♥ A 9 7 3
 ♦ K 6 4
 ♣ A K 6 2

N
W E S

5
 15 18
 2
 ♠ 10 9 8 4
 ♥ 10 4
 ♦ 8 7 5 2
 ♣ Q 10 3

West	North	East	South
		1 NT	Pass
2 ♣	Pass	2 ♥	Pass
4 NT	Pass	5 ♥	Pass
6 ♥	ALL	Pass	
6 ♥ by East			
Lead: ♠ 10			

you don't like to use Blackwood when you have a worthless doubleton, this bid will at least keep you out of slam if partner has ZERO Aces. You bid 4 NT and partner replies 5 ♥. Next?

He has two Aces so you bid 6 ♥ because you know there aren't enough points for seven.

The contract would be 6 ♥ played by East.

To make West the declarer ROTATE.

West plays 6 ♥. North leads the ♠T.

You toy with the idea of letting this ride to your ♠J, then you put away your childish toys and play the ♠A from dummy.

The two ♣ losers can be ruffed in dummy. A successful ♥ finesse could save you a loser in trumps. So, should you take the ♥ finesse now?

No, because if you play ♥A, then the ♥finesse LOSES, South might play a third ♥ and stop you from your two ruffs in dummy. A much better plan is to play the ♥K, then ♥A, and if the ♥Q drops, well and good. This time she doesn't, but both South and North follow to both trump leads. Play the ♣A K, the ♠K, and the ♦A K Q.

If somebody ruffs any of these it will be with the master trump and you won't care. But if they don't ruff yet, you just start cross-ruffing ♣s and ♠s and let them ruff in whenever they like.

But that is only correct as far as that suit is concerned. When you look at the entire hand you may find that by taking your two high trumps and leaving the master Queen out you can make all four of your small ones separately.

This is much more obvious play when you are missing 5 trumps including the Queen AND Jack because you don't have any choice then.

Did you consider bidding 6 NT? You are balanced, and the points are right. But with two 4-card Majors you should use Stayman, so you bid 2 ♣. Partner bids 2 ♥. Now what do say next?

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