

Board 1

North Deals
None Vul

 ♠ Q J 9 5
♥ J 4
♦ K T 8 2
♣ J 7 3

♠ 8 4
♥ A 8 7 2
♦ A 9 6 4
♣ A K Q

 N
W E
S
♠ T
♥ K Q T 9
♦ Q J 5 3
♣ 9 5 4 2

♠ A K 7 6 3 2
♥ 6 5 3
♦ 7
♣ T 8 6

West	North	East	South
	1NT	Pass	2♥
Pass	2♠	Pass	3♠
Pass	4♠	All Pass	

4♠ by North

OK, West has two trump tricks, but don't give up. Maybe, just maybe, there is a way out. Check your winners: You have won 3 tricks - ♥A and ♠A K. You have 4 more top winners - ♦A and ♣A K Q. If you can somehow add 3 more small trumps that will be the T you need.

Play dummy's ♦7 to your ♦A, then ruff a ♦. Play a ♣ to your hand and ruff another ♦. Play another ♣ to your hand and ruff your last ♦. While you are ruffing these three ♦s West is helplessly following suit.

Now play to your good ♣ while West again has to follow suit.

You have taken the first T tricks. Poor West is going to end up ruffing his partner's ♦ winner with one of his master trumps.

When they split badly, sometimes you can recover by ruffing with small trumps while the trump-heavy defender has to follow suit.

This is called "trump elopement".

Baker 100NT 49

Partner's 2♥ bid is a transfer; you respond 2♠.

Partner now bids 3♠. What do you bid?

Partner's 2♥ bid is a transfer; you respond 2♠.

Partner now bids 3♠. What do you bid?

You wouldn't have chosen ♠s for a trump suit.

But you aren't doing the choosing, partner is. He has set the trump suit as ♠s and asks that you bid game if you have a maximum 1NT opening. So you bid 4♠, as instructed.

East leads ♥K, West plays ♥J. You have no reason to hold up so you win the ♥A.

Things look simple. You can afford one ♠ loser so as long as they split 3-2 you will succeed. So you play ♠A, ♠K; East follows to the first and discards a ♦ on the second.

Board 2

East Deals

N-S Vul

♠ A K J
♥ A 7 2
♦ K Q 7 6
♣ A 9 4

♠ T 9 4 2

♥ J T 4 3

♦ 5 4

♣ T 8 5

	N	
W		E
	S	

♠ 8 7 6
♥ Q 8 5
♦ A J 2
♣ K Q J 3

♠ Q 5 3
♥ K 9 6
♦ T 9 8 3
♣ 7 6 2

West	North	East	South
		2NT	Pass
6NT	All Pass		

6NT by West

Suppose you lead a small ♠ from dummy and play your ♠J, and it loses to North's ♠Q. If you then try leading a small ♥ toward dummy's ♥Q, obviously the defender with the ♥K will grab it to set the contract.

Instead, try the effect of leading toward the ♥Q first. If North has the ♥K then you will succeed in creating the extra winner you need. But what if you play the ♥Q and South takes it with his ♥K? Too bad, but at least you are not dead yet. You still have a chance to finesse South for the ♠Q.

There are two critical cards, the ♠Q and the ♥K. However they are not the same degree of criticality.

If the ♠Q is in a favorable position, (with South), you are always going to make your contract no matter which you try first.

But if only the ♥K is in a favorable position, (with North), you can make the contract only if you try ♥s first.

Baker 100NT 50

Sometimes bidding is easy. Partner has 20 or 21 points, balanced. You have 13 points, balanced. Total = 33 or 34 points, balanced. So you close your eyes and bid 6NT.

The contract would be 6NT played by East.

To make West the declarer ROTATE.

West plays 6NT. North leads the ♦T. Too bad North didn't lead a ♠. Oh, well.

There is no way to get more than 4 winners in each minor suit, so you need to win either the ♠J or ♥Q.

Which one should you try?

Why not try both? If you make sure you try them in the right order you can have both chances.

Board 3

South Deals
None Vul

♠ 9 6 3
♥ A T 9 8
♦ A Q 5
♣ J T 9

♠ 7 4 2
♥ K Q J 6 5
♦ 7 3
♣ A 8 3

N
W E
S

♠ A K Q J
♥ 7 4 2
♦ J 8 6 4
♣ K Q

♠ T 8 5
♥ 3
♦ K T 9 2
♣ 7 6 5 4 2

West	North	East	South
Pass	2♦	Pass	1NT
Pass	3NT	Pass	2♥
All Pass			4♥

4♥ by South

ice-cold contract.

The way to lose only one ♥ trick is to keep leading toward dummy's honors. So come to your hand with a black card and play another ♥ in that direction, leading through West's ♥A. When you win that trick repeat the maneuver.

to see why this was necessary (but you've already figured it out, right?).

In fact it would only occur perhaps one time in seven.

But there is no reason to go down once every seven times when you don't need to.

Baker 100NT 51

Partner's 2♦ bid is a transfer; you respond 2♥.

Partner now bids 3NT. What do you bid?

Partner's 2♦ bid is a transfer; you respond 2♥.

Partner now bids 3NT. What do you bid?

Partner tells you that he has enough points to be in game, and that he holds exactly 5 ♥s. With your 3 ♥s you know of an 8-card Major fit so you correct the contract to 4♥.

You win the opening lead with your ♣Q.

The 2♦ losers are unavoidable, and even you will have to give up a trick to the Ace of trumps. So you have to make sure not to lose a second ♥.

Win the ♣Q and play a small ♥ to dummy's ♥J, which holds the trick.

I hope you didn't continue drawing trumps by playing the ♥K. If you did then you are going down in an

Board 4

West Deals

Both Vul

♠ Q 4
♥ K 8 6 2
♦ K Q J 3
♣ A 7 5

♠ 8 7 6 3

♥ 9 4

♦ T 5 2

♣ Q J T 4

	N	
W		E
	S	

♠ A K J 5
♥ A J T 5
♦ A 6 4
♣ 8 3

♠ T 9 2
♥ Q 7 3
♦ 9 8 7
♣ K 9 6 2

West	North	East	South
1NT	Pass	2♣	Pass
2♥	Pass	6♥	All Pass

6♥ by East

dummy's ♣, whether it is ruffed with the ♥Q or not.

But playing the deal as described will win whenever the ♥Q is doubleton, OR when the player with the protected ♥Q holds at least 3 ♦s.

Pretty good odds, better than the going rate for finesses, which is 50% off.

There was an alternate plan, just as good. After taking the two top trumps, run the ♠s, discarding two ♣s from your hand. As you see, either would have worked.

Baker 100NT 52

The 2♣ bid was Stayman, so you bid your ♥s.

Partner takes the direct approach and puts you in slam.

North finds their best lead, exposing your ♣ loser right off the bat.

If you can guess the ♥ finesse correctly you will make 7, discarding dummy's ♣ loser on the fourth ♦. But if you guess wrong they will immediately set you with a ♣ trick.

There is a better way - one that combines two chances. Win the ♣A. Then play your ♥A and ♥K. If the ♥Q happens to fall, pull the last trump and run your winners.

If the ♥Q DOESN'T fall, (she won't of course), switch to ♦s. On the fourth round of ♦s discard