

Deal 1

North Deals
None Vul

♠ 7 4
♥ 9 6 5
♦ K 9 6 2
♣ Q J 10 9

16
6 10
8

West

Pass

Pass

4 ♠ by North

Lead: ♦ Q

♠ A J 10 8 5 2

♥ K J 4

♦ A 8

♣ K 6



♠ Q 9 3

♥ A Q 10 2

♦ 7 5 3

♣ 7 5 4

North

1 ♠

4 ♠

East

Pass

Pass

South

2 ♠

Pass

♠ K 6

♥ 8 7 3

♦ Q J 10 4

♣ A 8 3 2

North is to play 4 ♠. East leads the ♦ Q.
West plays the ♦ 9.

Make a Plan, then .

Losers: ♠=1 ♥=0 ♦=1 ♣=2 Total = 4

On the plus side dummy has an extra ♥ winner on which you could discard a loser from your hand. The danger is that when you take the trump finesse, East might win the ♠ K and put his partner in the lead with the ♦ K for a ♣ play through your ♣ K.

To prevent that from happening all you have to do is hold up on the first ♦. You have to lose one trick in the suit no matter what, so lose it right now to East, the Safe Hand. East continues with another ♦ which you win.

You go over to dummy with a ♥ and play the ♠ Q, letting it ride. East wins with his ♠ K, but cannot play ♣s from his side of the table without handing you a trick. Whatever else he plays you win, pull trumps, and discard a ♣ loser on dummy's fourth ♥.

At suit contracts the most common reason for a hold-up is to keep the Danger Hand from getting the lead.

Deal 2

South Deals

None Vul

♠ 7 6 3

♥ K Q 10 8 5

♦ K 10 9

♣ 7 2

11
8 6
15

West

Pass

Pass

3 NT by South

Lead: ♥ K

♠ K Q 9

♥ A 3 2

♦ 7 5 3

♣ Q 9 5 4

	N	
W		E
	S	

♠ A 8 4

♥ J 7 4

♦ Q 8 4

♣ A K J 6

North

3 NT

East

Pass

South

1 NT

Pass

South is to play 3 NT. West leads the ♥ K.

Winners: ♠=3 ♥=1 ♦=0 ♣=4 Total = 8

Unless there is a miracle in the ♦s, (or a defensive error), you can't get a trick in that suit. But you have a chance for a second ♥ trick.

It's the Bath Coup again, just dressed up a little differently.

Let West hold the first trick, playing the ♥ 7 from your hand to conceal the ♥ 4 in the hope that West will continue the suit. If he does you have your ninth trick - if he doesn't, good luck.

Deal 3

North Deals

None Vul

♠ Q 4
♥ Q J 9 8
♦ J 8 6 2
♣ 8 7 2

16
6 8
10

West

Pass

3 NT by North

Lead: ♠ 7

♠ 10 9 5 3

♥ A K 4

♦ A Q 7

♣ K 6 3

	N	
W		E
	S	

♠ A 6

♥ 6 3 2

♦ K 5 3

♣ Q J 10 9 4

North

1 NT

Pass

East

Pass

Pass

South

3 NT

♠ K J 8 7 2
♥ 10 7 5
♦ 10 9 4
♣ A 5

North is to play 3 NT. East leads the ♠ 7.

Winners: ♠=1 ♥=2 ♦=3 ♣=0 Total = 6

It's pretty clear that your extra tricks are going to have to come from the ♣ suit. The danger here is that East may have a 5-card ♠ suit that he can establish and the ♣ A as an entry. So what is the best approach, hold up or not hold up?

To answer that question you must think about East's lead. Since he did not lead the ♠ K you know he doesn't have a suit headed by K Q J. So you can visualize West sitting there with a doubleton honor in ♠s. It might be ♠ K x, ♠ Q x or ♠ J x, but it is surely one of those three.

Think what West will do if you duck in dummy. He will play his honor, win the trick, and clear the suit by leading his small x. If East can get in with the ♣ A he will run the ♠s.

But what will West do if you play dummy's ♠ A? If he plays his small one the ♠ suit will block. If he unblocks his honor card then your ♠ T 9 5 3 will provide a second stopper in the suit. So you go up with dummy's ♠ A and guarantee the contract.

Of course from now on you will recognize it.