Deal 1
North Deals
None Vul

♠ Q 9
♡ A 9 5
♢ A J 6 3
♣ A K 7 4

♠ A 7 5 2
♡ 8 6
♢ K 9 5 2
♣ Q J 6

18
10 6
6

♠ 6 3
♡ K J 7 4 2
♢ Q 10
♣ 10 9 8 3

♠ K J 10 8 4
♡ Q 10 3
♢ 8 7 4
♣ 5 2

West	*North*	*East*	*South*
	1 ♢	Pass	1 ♠
Pass	2 NT	Pass	3 NT
Pass	Pass	Pass	

3 NT by North
Lead: ♡ 4

North is to play 3 NT. East leads the ♡ 4, you play low in dummy and West plays the ♡ 8.

Winners: ♠=0 ♡=2 ♢=1 ♣=2 Total = 5

The winners list looks a little skimpy, but what a nice solid ♠ suit. It will be a cinch to establish 4 winners in the suit - if only you have an entry to reach them.

You are probably getting good at this by now. The way to make sure of a dummy entry is to pass up the Cheap Trick ♡ 9 and win the first trick with the ♡ A. Since West did not play third-hand-high he probably doesn't have a high card to play. You are confident that East has led from the ♡ K so by taking the ♡ A at once you guarantee you can get back to dummy when you need to do so.

After you win the ♡ A you start on ♠s, and they hold-up their ♠ A for one round. But you can get to dummy and the rest of the ♠s by leading toward the ♡ Q.

Here's a question: How many times at the table have situations like this presented themselves but you didn't realize it? And of course, at the table there is no second page popping up to tell you what you should have done.

Deal 2
North Deals
None Vul

♠ Q J 10
♡ A K 6 2
♢ A 10 8 6
♣ K 3

♠ 9 8 7 6 5
♡ Q 8
♢ K J 3
♣ 8 6 4

♠ K 2
♡ J 10 9 5
♢ Q 7 4 2
♣ A 7 5

17
6 10
7

♠ A 4 3
♡ 7 4 3
♢ 9 5
♣ Q J 10 9 2

West	*North*	*East*	*South*
	1 ♢	1 NT	Pass
2 NT	Pass	3 NT	Pass
Pass	Pass		

3 NT by South
Lead: ♠ 9

South is to play 3 NT. West leads the ♠ 9, and East plays the ♠ K.

Winners: ♠=3 ♡=2 ♢=1 ♣=0 Total = 6

I'll bet you got this one. The extra ♣ tricks you need are winnable only if you can get back to your hand after knocking out the ♣ A. But the only possible entry card is the ♠ A. If you use it on the first trick the Defense will hold up their ♣ A for one trick and your hand will be shot..

So let East keep the first trick, (sacrificing one ♠ winner), and take the next ♠ in dummy. Then establish ♣s.

You sacrifice one ♠ trick for four ♣ tricks. A good deal.

There are two basic types; one where you give up a winner to gain an entry, and this type where you get the entry without giving up a thing.

It looks a little different, but the theme is the same. PROTECT YOUR ENTRY.

Deal 3
North Deals
None Vul

♠ K 7 6 4
♡ K 7
♢ K Q J 3
♣ A J 2

♠ A 10 8 3
♡ Q 9 6 4
♢ 10 8
♣ K 7 3

♠ J 9
♡ A 10 8 3 2
♢ 9 7 5
♣ 8 5 4

17
9 5
9

♠ Q 5 2
♡ J 5
♢ A 6 4 2
♣ Q 10 9 6

West	*North*	*East*	*South*
	1 NT	Pass	2 NT
Pass	3 NT	Pass	Pass
Pass			

3 NT by North
Lead: ♡ 3

North is to play 3 NT. East leads the ♡ 3, you play dummy's ♡ J and West plays the ♡ Q.

Winners: ♠=0 ♡=1 ♢=4 ♣=1 Total = 6

Unless you want to go down really, really early you had better take your ♡ K right now. And unless you want to go down almost as early you'd better stay completely away from the ♠ suit. So that only leaves you the ♣ suit to get 3 more winners in. West will have to have ♣ K so you can finesse it. You are also going to have to be smart with entries. Got it?

If West has just ♣ K x then one finesse, followed by the ♣ A to drop the ♣ K and a small ♣ back to dummy will give you the 4 ♣ winners you must have. But if West has ♣ K x x and refuses to cover then you will be able to establish the ♣s but will need an extra dummy entry to enjoy that last winner.

So win the ♡ K and play the ♢ K Q. If both defenders follow suit you can afford to overtake your ♢ J with dummy's ♢ A. Now play the ♣T and let it ride. If it holds the trick play another ♣ to your ♣ J and then play the ♣ A, dropping West's ♣ K.

Enter dummy by playing your ♢ 3 to the ♢ 6 and take your established ♣ for the ninth trick.

With only one outside entry to dummy your choices are limited.

You might play West for ♣ K x and lead a small to your ♣ J, then play ♣ A.

Or you might try leading the ♣ Q hoping that West will see this as a time to "cover an honor with an honor".

Deal 4
South Deals
None Vul

♠ Q 10 7
♡ K 3
♢ 8 7 4 3
♣ A J 6 5

♠ 6 4
♡ 9 7 6 4
♢ Q 9 5
♣ Q 10 8 4

♠ K 5 3 2
♡ A Q J 10
♢ J 10
♣ 7 3 2

10
4 11
15

♠ A J 9 8
♡ 8 5 2
♢ A K 6 2
♣ K 9

West	*North*	*East*	*South*
			1 NT
Pass	3 NT	Pass	Pass
Pass			

3 NT by South
Lead: ♣ 4

South is to play 3 NT. West leads the ♣ 4, you play dummy's ♣ 5 and East plays the ♣ 7.

Winners: ♠=1 ♡=0 ♢=2 ♣=3 Total = 6

You'd really like to find 3 winners without broaching that ♡ suit, so you decide to pin your hopes on the ♠ finesse. But you have a problem. When you win the first trick with the ♣ 9 your only safe entry to dummy is by leading your ♣ K to the ♣ A. And this uses up one of your ♣ winners! Do you see a way to avoid the problem?

Don't win the first trick with the ♣ 9, win with the ♣ K. Then at trick two enter dummy by playing your ♣ 9 and finessing the ♣ J! You are pretty sure West has led from the ♣ Q so you expect this to work. Then play the ♠T, underplaying your ♠ 8. You had better cash the ♣ A next, then the ♠ Q, letting it ride if not covered. Finally, one last ♠ finesse gives you 4 ♠ winners.

Here it doesn't actually create an extra entry, it just preserves the one entry you have but saves you an actual trick.

Here is an interesting point. Suppose that West's opening lead had been a ♡ and East had taken the first four ♡ tricks then played a ♢. You would have played the hand the same way! Take the ♣ K, then finesse the ♣ J.

Deal 5
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

♠ 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 6
North Deals
None Vul

♠ K
♡ A K 7 5 3
♢ A K Q 6
♣ K 10 5

♠ 8 7 5 4
♡ 10 8
♢ J 9 7 2
♣ Q 8 4

♠ A 6 2
♡ Q J 9 4
♢ 10 3
♣ 9 7 6 2

22
3 7
8

♠ Q J 10 9 3
♡ 6 2
♢ 8 5 4
♣ A J 3

West	*North*	*East*	*South*
	2 ♣	Pass	2 ♠
Pass	3 ♡	Pass	3 NT
Pass	Pass	Pass	

3 NT by South
Lead: ♢ 2

South is to play 3 NT. West 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 East. If he has the ♣ Q you will win all 3 ♣ tricks, but if West 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 West. If West 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 West DOESN'T take the ♣ Q, or if East actually has it, then you will have 3 ♣ tricks and your contract.