

Deal 1

South Deals ♠ 8 5 2

None Vul ♥ Q 9 8 6 2

♦ K Q 6

♣ A 8

♠ A K J 9 6 4

♥ J

♦ 10 5 3

♣ J 7 4



♠ 10

♥ K 7 4

♦ 9 8 4 2

♣ 10 6 5 3 2

♠ Q 7 3

♥ A 10 5 3

♦ A J 7

♣ K Q 9

11
10 3
16

West

North

East

South

2 ♠

3 ♥

Pass

1 NT

Pass

Pass

Pass

4 ♥

4 ♥ by North

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, West takes the ♠ A K J and then plays a small ♣. East 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 East holds the singleton ♥ K, you can play a small ♥ to dummy's ♥ A, dropping the ♥ K, then finesse West out of his ♥ J. Or, if West holds the singleton ♥ J you can play your ♥ Q, finessing East for the ♥ K and at the same time smothering West's ♥ J.

Which basket will you put your eggs into?

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

So you win the ♣ A in your hand, play the ♥ Q and let it ride if East 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 West overcalled makes it more likely that he holds more high cards than East, and this skews the odds toward West holding the ♥ K.

But think about it. If West 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 East's ♥ J.

Deal 2

South Deals
None Vul

♠ 10 8 5
♥ A 6 2
♦ Q J 10 7 5
♣ J 6

10
8 5
17

West

North

East

South

Pass

2 ♣

Pass

1 NT

Pass

2 NT

Pass

2 ♠

Pass

Pass

Pass

3 NT

3 NT by South

Lead: ♦ Q

♠ A Q 6
♥ 8 7 4 3
♦ 8 3
♣ A 10 8 2



♠ 9 7 3
♥ Q J 10 9
♦ 9 4 2
♣ Q 5 3

♠ K J 4 2
♥ K 5
♦ A K 6
♣ K 9 7 4

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 West 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 West. East 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 East plays low.

West wins the ♣ J, but you win the game. West 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 3

North Deals
None Vul

♠ Q J 9 7
♥ 10 5 4
♦ J 9 6
♣ Q 9 6

12
6 6
16

West

North

East

South

Pass
Pass
3 NT by North

Lead: ♥ 6

♠ K 8 6 2

♥ Q 8

♦ A 8 3

♣ K 5 4 3



♠ A 4 3

♥ K 7 3

♦ K Q 2

♣ A 10 7 2

♠ 10 5

♥ A J 9 6 2

♦ 10 7 5 4

♣ J 8

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 North.

To make South the declarer ROTATE.

South plays 3 NT. West leads the ♥ 6.

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

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

the ♥T because from ♥ A J T 6, ♥ A T 9 6 or ♥ J T 9 6 West 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 East get the lead. East 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 East 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 East plays low. You don't expect the ♣T to win the trick, it is more of a duck than a finesse. West 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 East 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 West's ♣ J fell on the next trick you would have all 4 ♣ tricks!

Deal 4

South Deals
None Vul

♠ A Q 10
♥ J 6 2
♦ Q J 10 8
♣ 9 6 4

8
10 5
17

♠ J 7 5 2
♥ A K 9 8 5
♦ 7 3
♣ 8 3



♠ 9 8 3
♥ 7 3
♦ A K 4 2
♣ A K Q J

♠ K 6 4
♥ Q 10 4
♦ 9 6 5
♣ 10 7 5 2

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

In response to partner's Stayman bid you bid 2 ♦ to indicate no 4-card Major. Partner now bids 2 ♥. What do you say?

In response to partner's Stayman bid you bid 2 ♦ to indicate no 4-card Major. Partner now bids 2 ♥. What do you say?

Partner's bid shows 5 ♥s, and by inference, 4 ♠s. Your hand does not provide an 8-card fit in either Major, so with 17 points you say 3 NT.

You need one more winner and without question it must come from the ♥ suit.

Your problem is finding dummy entries, all dummy has is the ♥ A K.

You must find the ♥s split 3-3. You must also duck a ♥ to keep a valuable entry. Win the ♦ and play the ♥ 7, ducking in dummy.

East will win the ♥ and return a ♦ which you win in your hand. You now play your last ♥ to dummy, and if the suit was originally 3-3 you will win 4 ♥ tricks.

to see whether you made the game or not.

Of course you'd look pretty stupid to have those 2 ♥ winners in dummy and no way to reach them.

So you use the duck instead.

Deal 5

North Deals
None Vul

♠ 6 3
♥ 9 8 4
♦ A 8 6 4 3
♣ Q J 3

4
7 9
20

West

North

East

South

Pass

2 NT

Pass

3 ♥

Pass

3 ♠

Pass

4 ♠

Pass

Pass

Pass

4 ♠ by North

Lead: ♥ Q

♠ J 9 8 7 5 2

♥ 6 5 2

♦ K

♣ 9 7 4



♠ A Q 4

♥ Q J 10 3

♦ 10 7 2

♣ 10 6 5

♠ K 10

♥ A K 7

♦ Q J 9 5

♣ A K 8 2

With your 6-card Major suit you naturally use a transfer; bid 3 ♥. Partner responds 3 ♠.

With your 6-card Major suit you naturally use a transfer; bid 3 ♥. Partner responds 3 ♠.

Partner has at least 20 points so you bid 4 ♠.

The contract would be 4 ♠ played by North.

To make South the declarer ROTATE.

South plays 4 ♠. West leads the ♥ Q and East plays ♥ 4.

You win the first trick with your ♥ A. By doing this you leave West in the dark about who holds the ♥ K. If you had instead won with the ♥ K West would have known you held both honors since East would have played the ♥ A if he held it.

You have 2 losers to get rid of and the good news is that you can establish 2 ♦ winners pretty easily. So do you start pulling trumps now?

No, stay away from trumps for now. You might have to lose the lead twice in trumps, and the first time they get the lead they will play another ♥ and expose the loser in that suit. Then, the next time they get the lead they will take their ♥ winner. You need to get rid of that ♥ loser BEFORE you start on trumps.

Play a small ♦ to the ♦ K. East will take this and play another ♥ to your ♥ K. Play your ♦ Q and discard dummy's ♥ loser. Now you might just as well ruff that ♥ in dummy, (with the ♠ 7 to be safe), and play trumps from that side. It turns out that West has both high trumps but you don't care because dummy's ♣ loser can be dumped on your ♦ J.

Did you notice that if the opening lead had been a ♣ instead of a ♥ you would have used the same technique?