

**Board 1**

South Deals

None Vul

♠ 8  
♥ 7 5 2  
♦ J T 7 3  
♣ K 9 8 5 2

♠ Q T 9 4

♥ A Q 8 6

♦ A K

♣ A J 4

	N	
W		E
	S	

♠ K J 6 2  
♥ 3  
♦ 9 8 4 2  
♣ Q T 6 3

♠ A 7 5 3  
♥ K J T 9 4  
♦ Q 6 5  
♣ 7

West	North	East	South
Pass	3♣	Pass	2NT
Pass	6♥	All Pass	3♥

6♥ by North

At first thought it seems the ♠ lead has saved you a guess in the suit. By playing low in dummy you will force East to put on the King, (if he has it), winning the trick but leaving you with a pretty good position in ♠s.

That's why it's good to have second thoughts at the Bridge table. Think about the meaning of the ♠8 lead. If it is fourth down, then the Rule of 11 tells you that there will be 3 cards higher than the 8 spread among North, East, and South. BUT YOU CAN SEE 4 HIGHER CARDS. So your conclusion is that West has NOT made a fourth-down lead, but rather has led top-of-nothing, top-of-a-doubleton, or perhaps a singleton.

You don't know which of the above, but you do know that East holds both the ♠ K J. The danger is if the ♠8 is a singleton and you play low from dummy they could get a ♠ trick and a ♠ ruff. So don't play low from dummy. Win the ♠A at trick 1, pull trumps and then play ♠s from dummy toward your ♠ Q T 9, giving East the ♠K but finessing him out of his known ♠J.

If East led the ♠8 from ♠ 8 6 or ♠ 8 2 then it also wouldn't matter whether you played the ♠A or not, you would always make the contract.

If East led the singleton ♠8 then you had better play the ♠A or you will be down before you start.

It is unlikely that East would lead the ♠8 from any holding containing one or both of the honors.

**Baker 100NT 66**

First find out about Major suit fits by bidding Stayman. So bid 3♣ and partner says 3♥. What now?

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Feel free to use Blackwood. But if partner shows 3 Aces you only have enough points to bid 6, and if he shows 2 Aces you would still bid 6. So Blackwood will keep you out of slam if he has only 1 Ace. Or, you could just take a chance and bid 6♥.

The contract would be 6♥ played by North.

To rotate the hands and make South the declarer

South plays 6♥. West leads the ♠8. To play the ♠A or not to play the ♠A, that is the question.

**Board 2**

South Deals

N-S Vul

♠ 9 8 6  
♥ Q J 9 2  
♦ K Q J 7  
♣ T 5

♠ A K 3

♥ A 7 6 4

♦ 8 6 2

♣ K J 3

	N	
W		E
	S	

♠ Q J T 4 2  
♥ T  
♦ A 9 5 4 3  
♣ 7 6

♠ 7 5  
♥ K 8 5 3  
♦ T  
♣ A Q 9 8 4 2

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

4♥ by North

Baker 100NT 67

Never mind trying to decide how to show the ♣ suit; with a 4-card Major your obligation is to use Stayman.

You say 2♣ and partner bids 2♥. What now?

Never mind trying to decide how to show the ♣ suit; with a 4-card Major your obligation is to use Stayman.

You say 2♣ and partner bids 2♥. What now?

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 South.

To make North the declarer ROTATE.

North plays 4♥. East leads the ♦ K. The ♦ K holds the trick and East 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 West shows out on the second trump lead. Ouch!

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

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

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

**Board 3**

South Deals

E-W Vul

♠ T 9 7 4

♥ J 9 6

♦ T 8 5

♣ A Q J

♠ A J 6

♥ K 8 4

♦ A K 6

♣ 7 5 4 2



♠ K Q 3  
♥ A 7 3  
♦ Q J 3  
♣ T 9 6 3

West	North	East	South
Pass	3NT	All Pass	1NT

3NT by North

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

East 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.

**Baker 100NT 68**

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

The contract would be 3NT played by South.

To make North the declarer ROTATE.

North plays 3NT. East leads the ♠T and West 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 ♣.

**Board 4**

South Deals  
Both Vul  
  
 ♠ K 8 3  
  5  
♦ Q 9 6 4 2  
♣ T 9 7 3

♠ A Q 5  
♥ Q T 9 3  
♦ A J T 7  
♣ A 8  
  
 N              ♠ T 9 7 4  
W              ♥ 8 7  
E              ♦ 8 5 3  
S              ♣ K Q 5 2  
  
 ♠ J 6 2  
♥ A K J 6 4 2  
♦ K  
♣ J 6 4

West	North	East	South
			1NT
Pass	2♦	Pass	3♥
Pass	4NT	Pass	5♠
Pass	6♥	Pass	
6♥ by North			

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

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? 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 4NT, 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 4NT and partner replies 5♠. Next? Three Aces. You still should stop at 6♥, based on points.

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.

**Baker 100NT 69**

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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?

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 4NT, 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!

**Board 5**

East Deals

N-S Vul

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

♠ A J 2

♥ A T 5

♦ A J 7

♣ J 9 7 6

	N	
W		E
	S	

♠ Q 9 5  
♥ K Q 8 6 3  
♦ K 6 2  
♣ A 3

♠ K 6 3  
♥ 7 4 2  
♦ Q T 9  
♣ 8 5 4 2

West      North      East      South

1♥

1NT

All Pass

1 NT by South

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 West plays low. (you could play the ♦T/♦7 combination first).

Finesse the ♦ again. If West ducks a second time you must now take the ♠ finesse while you are still in dummy. If West 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.

**Baker 100NT 70**

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

The contract would be 1NT played by South.

To make North the declarer ROTATE.

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

It probably makes no difference whether you hold up or not since West surely has most of the high cards. However, holding up once is a good idea because East may have a singleton ♥ and have to switch to something which helps you. East 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 West opening the bidding there is a