

**Deal 1**

North Deals  
None Vul

♠ A K 6 5  
♥ 8 3  
♦ K J 7 3  
♣ A K 5

♠ Q 10 8 3 2  
♥ J 9 7  
♦ 10 6  
♣ 8 7 3



♠ J 9  
♥ Q 10 6 5  
♦ Q 9 2  
♣ J 10 9 4

18  
3 6  
13

♠ 7 4  
♥ A K 4 2  
♦ A 8 5 4  
♣ Q 6 2

West	North	East	South
	1 ♦	Pass	1 ♥
Pass	1 ♠	Pass	3 ♦
Pass	4 ♣	Pass	4 ♥
Pass	6 ♦	Pass	Pass
6 ♦ by North			
Lead: ♣ J			

The 4 ♣ and 4 ♥ bids were control-showing. North is to play 6 ♦. East leads the ♣ J.

Losers: ♠=2 ♥=0 ♦=2 ♣=0 Total = 4

That loser count may be technically correct but actually it's wonky. As long as ♦s split 3-2 like they should you only have 1 loser in the suit. And if West has the ♦ Q you can finesse and have no losers. Also, those 2 ♠ losers could be ruffed in dummy.

Suppose you tried it like this: Win the ♣, play ♦ A, then a ♦ to the ♦ J, then pull the last trump with your ♦ K. That would only leave one trump in dummy for ruffing ♠ losers, but you could make the slam.

But suppose the ♦ finesse lost to East. And further suppose that East then played another ♦. Since only 1 ♠ could be ruffed you'd be down 1. Try something else.

Win the ♣. Play the ♦ A and ♦ K, forgetting about even trying the finesse. If the ♦ Q falls that's good, but if it doesn't, no problem, just leave it out there. Then start on your other high cards. Take 2 more ♣s, 2 ♠s, and 2 ♥s. Then start cross-ruffing the last 4 ♠s and ♥s. The ♦ Q guy can trump in whenever he likes but you will make 12 tricks.

again to see what would have happened if you had finessed in trumps.

You need the rest of the tricks but the best you can do now is to take the two high ♣s, the two high ♥s, the two high ♠s, one ♥ ruff in your hand and one ♠ ruff in dummy. Letting East pull that third round of trumps did you in.

Leaving the master trump out, you would now proceed to take your two high ♣s, two high ♥s and two high ♠s.

Needing just three more tricks, and with two trumps in each hand you just cross-ruff ♥s and ♠. East can ruff in with the ♦ Q at some point but he cannot prevent you from winning at least three of your trumps separately.

**Deal 2**

North Deals

None Vul

♠ J 10 5 3

♥ Q J 10 3

♦ 10 8 3

♣ 9 3

13  
4 7  
16

♠ A 8 2

♥ K 6 5

♦ K 4 2

♣ Q J 7 4



♠ K Q 9 7 4

♥ 9 4

♦ A 6 5

♣ A K 6

♠ 6

♥ A 8 7 2

♦ Q J 9 7

♣ 10 8 5 2

West	North	East	South
	1 ♣	Pass	1 ♠
Pass	1 NT	Pass	2 ♦
Pass	2 ♠	Pass	4 ♠
Pass	Pass	Pass	

4 ♠ by South

Lead: ♥ Q

South's 2 ♦ bid was New Minor Forcing, asking if North has 3 ♠s. North's 2 ♠ response said "Yes, I have." South is to play 4 ♠. West leads the ♥ Q.

Losers: ♠ = ? ♥ = 2 ♦ = 1 ♣ = 0 Total = 3?

If the ♠s split 3-2 as they should, you have no ♠ loser and your plan will merely be to pull trumps and play winners. So what you do in that case is start figuring how to deal with a 4-1 split.

But first you should deal with the ♥ K situation. Do you cover the ♥ Q or not?

Competent defenders do not underlead Aces at suit contracts. So if you are playing against a competent West you certainly don't cover. You play low on this trick and on the ♥ J continuation, hoping

East started with a doubleton ♥ A. But he didn't, and he plays it on the third ♥ which you ruff.

Back to the Plan. Having ruffed the ♥ you are down to just 4 trumps in your hand. You play ♠ A, ♠ K, ♠ Q, noting that East discards on the second round. Therefore West will get a trump trick.

But don't give it to him now! Leave West with his master trump and switch to ♣s. If West doesn't ruff at all you will run 4 ♣ tricks and discard your ♦ loser. If he does decide to ruff it will be with a trick you were going to lose anyway. You win his return, ruffing a ♥ with the last trump, and continue playing ♣ and ♦ winners.

But you don't have to lose anything else as long as you don't lose trump control. So leave the master trump with West and just cash your minor suit winners. Let West ruff whenever he wants to because that will establish your ♠ 9 to control any more ♥ leads. If he decides not to ruff at all then he can have the final trick with his high trump.

**Deal 3**

North Deals

None Vul

♠ J 7 6 2  
 ♥ 10 7 4 3  
 ♦ 9 5  
 ♣ Q J 6

27  
 4 4  
 5

West

Pass

Pass

Pass

6 ♠ by North

Lead: ♦ Q

♠ A K Q 9 5 3

♥ A

♦ A K 4

♣ A K 2



♠ 10 8

♥ K Q 8 6

♦ 8 7 2

♣ 9 7 5 3

North

2 ♣

2 ♠

6 ♠

East

Pass

Pass

Pass

South

2 ♦

3 ♥

Pass

North is to play 6 ♠. East leads the ♦ Q.

Losers: ♠ = 0 or 1 ♥ = 0 ♦ = 1 ♣ = 1

Total = 2 or 3

You probably do not have a trump loser because they will probably split 3-2. Still, a 4-1 split is certainly not out of the question.

But those two minor suit losers are definite UNLESS you can somehow get to dummy's ♥ K Q. Can you?

Yes you can get to dummy, in the trump suit. Win the opening ♦ lead. Unblock the ♥ A before touching trumps. Play a SMALL trump toward dummy. A defender will surely take his ♠ J here, and play another ♦. Win that trick and play another small ♠. This one will get you into dummy. And by the way, East

discards a ♦ so it turns out you were going to lose a trump in any case. Play dummy's ♥ K Q, discarding your two minor losers. Ruff a ♥ to return to your hand, pull trumps and claim.

By establishing the ♠ entry to dummy you can discard the ♦ and ♣.

Even without a trump loser you will still go down 1 if you cannot take two discards on dummy's ♥s.

So you give up a trump trick and gain two ♥ tricks in return. What a deal.

**Deal 4**

South Deals

None Vul

♠ J 10 8 6 3

♥ Q 8 7

♦ A Q 10 5

♣ 4

6  
9 7  
18

♠ A Q

♥ 6 4 3

♦ 8 7 4 2

♣ 6 5 3 2

	N	
W		E
	S	

♠ K 9

♥ A J 9

♦ 6

♣ A K Q J 9 8 7

♠ 7 5 4 2

♥ K 10 5 2

♦ K J 9 3

♣ 10

West	North	East	South
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Pass

1 NT

Pass

1 ♣

Pass

4 ♣

Pass

3 ♣

Pass

Pass

Pass

5 ♣

5 ♣ by South

Lead: ♠ J

South is to play 5 ♣. West leads the ♠ J.

Losers: ♠=0 ♥=2 ♦=1 ♣=0 Total = 3

You have no way to get rid of the Fast ♦ loser, but you might be able to eliminate one of the ♥ losers. If East holds either ♥ K T x or ♥ Q T x then a Deep Finesse would save one loser.

Should you pull trumps right away?

No, you cannot pull trumps yet. For the Deep Finesse to work you must lead twice from dummy. The only way to get into dummy twice is in the ♠ suit and one of those times must be at trick 1.

Win the first trick with dummy's ♠ Q and play a ♥ to your ♥ 9. Assume West wins with the ♥ K or ♥ Q, and plays another ♠.

In dummy for the last time, play a ♥ to your ♥ J and hope it wins.

So you couldn't pull that one round of trumps because you couldn't waste either visit to dummy for anything other than the ♥ finesses.