

Deal 1

South Deals
None Vul

♠ 10 7 4
♥ A J 3
♦ 10 8 5 2
♣ J 9 3

13
6 8
13

West

♠ Q 8 6 3
♥ 9 7 2
♦ Q 7
♣ A K Q 6



♠ A J 5 2
♥ 8 5 4
♦ A K J 3
♣ 8 4

North

East

South

Pass

1 ♠

Pass

1 ♦

Pass

4 ♠

Pass

2 ♠

Pass

4 ♠ by North

Lead: ♥ K

You are North and it is your bid. Decide what you would say, then on BID.

A jump to 2 NT would not be a terrible bid. But it is more important to show your 4-card Major.

So you bid 1 ♠ instead. Partner raises to 2 ♠.

What do you bid next?

It's another case of HE WHO KNOWS, GOES. You know you have at least 26 points and 8 ♠s. Of course you trust that partner would not raise a suit you bid as responder with only 3 trumps. So you bid 4 ♠.

North plays 4 ♠. East leads the ♥ K. The defense takes the first three ♥ tricks, then switch to a ♣.

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

It kinda makes you wish you'd bid 2 NT after all doesn't it?

At least the picture is clear. Very clear. You have no wiggle room left so you must bring in the ♠s

without losing a trick. So East MUST have the ♠ K. Therefore you assume East does hold the ♠ K.

Suppose you lead the ♠ Q. East will play his ♠ K and force you to play dummy's ♠ A. Then one of the defenders will win the third ♠ with the ♠ T or ♠ 9.

No, you only have one chance to make this contract - East must hold a doubleton ♠ K x. So you lead a SMALL ♠ from your hand and finesse dummy's ♠ J. Then play the ♠ A, dropping East's ♠ K, then pull the last trump with the ♠ Q.

Since you would only have one more honor you'd be bound to lose a trick.

Deal 2

East Deals
None Vul

♠ A 7 2
♥ Q J 3
♦ Q 8 6 2
♣ 9 6 4

4
9 17
10

West

2 NT

Pass

3 NT by East

Lead: ♠ Q

♠ 5 3
♥ 10 7 6 4 2
♦ A 7 5
♣ 7 5 3



♠ Q J 10 9 8 4
♥ A 5
♦ 9 3
♣ Q J 10

North

Pass

Pass

East

1 NT

3 NT

South

2 ♠

Pass

You are East and it is your bid. Decide what you would say, then on BID.

With 17 points and a balanced hand you naturally open 1 NT. South overcalls 2 ♠. Your partner then bids 2 NT.

Your partner invited you to bid 3 NT if you had 17 points, and you have 17 points. You trust your partner so you bid 3 NT.

East plays 3 NT. South leads the ♠ Q.

Winner count: ♠ 2 : ♥ 0 : ♦ 0 : ♣ 2 : Total = 4

This looks scary. Needing 5 more tricks means you are going to have to establish BOTH red suits. And with only two ♠ stoppers you have to hope South doesn't have both red Aces. If he does, you're down, so just assume that he only has one of them. Now if you can just figure out which Ace South has you can establish that suit first.

But you don't have to guess, there is a better way. South overcalled at the 2-level with a Queen-high

suit and one outside Ace. THAT is bold. Surely he has at least a 6-card suit to justify that overcall. If so, then a simple hold-up will be worthwhile. So you let South hold the first trick, and when he leads another ♠ you win the ♠ K in your hand. If South has a 6-card suit North is now void of ♠s.

Play ♦s to drive out the ♦ A. If North has it he will not have another ♠ to force you with. If South has it he can force out your last ♠, but then won't have the ♥ A for an entry. However the Aces are split - as long as South doesn't have both - you will establish 9 tricks.

With the holdup it didn't matter which red suit you established first.

Deal 3

South Deals
None Vul

♠ 10 9 7 3
♥ A K 8 4
♦ 10 8
♣ A 10 3

8
11 12
9

West

Pass
2 ♠ by South
Lead: ♥ A

♠ K Q J 8 6 2
♥ 5
♦ Q 6 4
♣ 9 7 2



♠ 5 4
♥ 10 9 6 3
♦ A K 9 2
♣ Q 8 5

North

Pass

East

Pass

South
2 ♠

You are North and it is your bid. Decide what you would say, then on BID.

Don't even think twice. Just pass and wonder why the opponents aren't bidding.

South would play 2 ♠.

North plays 2 ♠. East leads ♥ A, then ♥ K.

Losers: ♠ 1/2 : ♥ 1 : ♦ 0 : ♣ 3 : Total = 5/6

If East has both ♣ A and ♣ K you could save yourself 1 ♣ loser, but the odds are about 3 to 1 against that. Your best chance of making this contract is just to hold your ♠ losers to 1. With an expected 3-2 split there will not be a problem, but you might as well take extra pains if you can do so without risk.

So after you ruff the ♥ K you do NOT play the ♠ K. Instead you play a ♦ to dummy and lead a ♠ toward your honors. Your extra pains pay off when West plays the ♠ A, which was a singleton.

It costs nothing to make a careful play. Most of the time it doesn't matter, but every now and again it pays off in a contract that couldn't be made without the careful play.

Deal 4

West Deals

None Vul

♠ A K 9 8 6 5 3		♠ 7
♥ 6 2		♥ A J 9 8 7 5 4
♦ Q 4		♦ 8
♣ 5 2		♣ K 10 6 3

11
9 8
12

♠ 4 2
♥ K Q 10
♦ A J 7 5 3
♣ Q 8 7

West	North	East	South
3 ♥	Pass	Pass	Pass
3 ♥ by West			
Lead: ♠ Q			

You are East and it is your bid. Decide what you would say, then on BID.

You really really want to say 3 ♠. Here are three good reasons you shouldn't.

You have 9 ♥s between you. You may have only 7 ♠s. If you bid 3 ♠ partner may bid again. You haven't been doubled.

West would play 3 ♥.

East plays 3 ♥. South leads the ♠ Q.

It turns out there was a fourth reason not to bid 3 ♠ - the opponents might lead the suit.

Losers: ♠ 0 : ♥ 1/2 : ♦ 1 : ♣ 4 : Total = 6/7

The ♠ lead is about the best thing that could have happened to you. You win with dummy's ♠ A and play ♠ K, discarding your ♦. You then lead a small ♣, covering anything North plays.

You'd like to ruff a ♣ if you can, but if they play trumps to stop you then you'd like the trump play to come from South. South leads the ♥ 3, North plays the ♥ K, and you win with the ♥ A. You play a small ♣. If the defender who wins the ♣ doesn't play another trump then you can ruff your third ♣ in dummy. If the defender DOES play a trump, then you lose only one trump trick. You end up going down 1, which is pretty good.

Deal 5

South Deals
None Vul

♠ K 7 4
♥ 8 7 2
♦ K 8 2
♣ J 10 7 5

14
7 5
14

West

Pass

Pass

3 NT by North

Lead: ♥ J

♠ Q J 10
♥ A 3
♦ 10 9 5 4
♣ A K 3 2



♠ A 8 2
♥ K Q 5
♦ Q J 7 3
♣ Q 6 4

North

2 NT

Pass

East

Pass

Pass

South

1 ♦

3 NT

You are North and it is your bid. Decide what you would say, then on BID.

You have three reasonable choices. You could bid 2 ♣, you could jump to 3 ♦, or you could jump to 2 NT.

While all are reasonable, the jump to 2 NT stands out as the most constructive by far. Partner bids 3 NT and you pass.

North plays 3 NT. East leads the ♥ J.

Winner count: ♠ 1 : ♥ 3 : ♦ 0 : ♣ 3 : Total = 7

If East has the ♠ K then a finesse will gain you the two winners you need. However, if West has the ♠ K then the finesse will gain you just one winner and you will be hoping for a 3-3 ♣ split for the other. While this is a possible Plan, there is a far better one.

Rather than chance the ♠ finesse, you should immediately start establishing your ♦s. This has the advantage of not giving the defense any NEW

winners - they were always going to get their two high ♦s. So win the ♥ A and play the ♦T. Somebody will take this and probably continue with a ♥. Take the ♥ Q and play the ♦Q. Somebody will take this and probably continue with a ♥. Take the ♥ K and then the rest of your winners. Maybe the ♣s will split 3-3 and give you an overtrick. And if you have assured the contract you MIGHT even try the ♠ finesse.

West would have won and played a ♥, removing your second stopper. When ♣s did not split 3-3 you would have been forced to try a ♦. West would win his ♦ K and drive out the last ♥ stopper. Then East would be able to take the ♦ A plus his established ♥s.

Deal 6

East Deals
None Vul

♠ 8 7
♥ A 8 3
♦ 9 5 2
♣ Q 8 7 4 3

7
6 18
9

West

2 ♥

Pass

4 ♥ by East

Lead: ♠ Q

♠ 9 4
♥ 7 6 5 2
♦ Q 7 6 4
♣ A J 9



♠ Q J 10 5 3
♥ 4
♦ K 10 8 3
♣ K 10 2

North

Pass

Pass

East

1 ♥

4 ♥

South

Pass

Pass

You are East and it is your bid. Decide what you would say, then on BID.

With 19 points and a 5-card ♥ suit you open 1 ♥.

Partner raises you to 2 ♥. What do you bid?

Partner's bid shows 6-10 points. If he has 6 it might be close, but otherwise you should have a game. You bid 4 ♥.

East plays 4 ♥. South leads the ♠ Q.

Losers: ♠ 2 : ♥ 0 : ♦ 1 : ♣ 2 : Total = 5

The three minor suit losers cannot be avoided, but the two ♠ losers can be ruffed in dummy. A small amount of caution is in order. Win the ♠ K and play the ♠ A. Ruff a ♠ with dummy's ♥ 8. North shows out but cannot over-ruff. Return to your hand with the ♦ A and ruff your last ♠ with dummy's ♥ A. Return to your hand with a trump. You will lose three minor suit cards and nothing else.