

I/N News ... especially for you!

Should you double a slam with two aces

To bid and make a Small Slam, only one trick can be lost. But a defender holding two aces should not necessarily double a Small Slam - the opponents are likely to have a void somewhere so one of your aces may not win a trick. That said, you have to feel sympathy for this week's East who, holding no less than three aces, watched his opponents bid and make a Small Slam. Here is the hand:

South Deals	♠ K 7 5 4 2
None Vul	♥ K 7 6
	♦ —
	♣ K Q J 7 6
♠ Q J 10 8	♠ A 9 6 3
♥ 3	♥ 9 8
♦ Q 9 5 3 2	♦ A J 7 4
♣ 9 8 5	♣ A 3 2
	♠ —
	♥ A Q J 10 5 4 2
	♦ K 10 8 6
	♣ 10 4
West North East South	
4 ♥	
Pass	6 ♥ Dbl Pass
Pass	Pass

West led ♠ Q and dummy and East played low, declarer trumping. Correctly resisting the temptation to trump ♦ s, declarer realized that by far the easiest route to 12 tricks was to draw trumps then - assuming trumps split 2-1 - establish ♣ s by knocking out ♣ A. He cashed ♥ Q and ♥ J then led ♣ 10. East ducked his ♣ A, then won ♣ 4 to dummy's ♣ J. He had no sensible return so simply exited with ♣ 3. Declarer was able to enjoy dummy's three established ♣ s discarding ♦ 1086 from hand, trump ♠ 4, trump ♦ K with ♥ K, then table his remaining cards, all trumps.

Last week we saw that it was a mistake to double a Slam if you would be unhappy should the opponents remove themselves to an alternative contract. This week we see that holding two - even three - aces is not a good enough reason to double.

ANDREW'S TIP: Do not double a freely bid Small Slam on the basis of holding two - even three - aces.

from Andrew Robson Bridge

Opening 1NT from Andrew Robson Bridge

An opening bid of 1NT shows a balanced hand with 12-14 points. However, it is important to realize that high-card points are but a guide to trick-taking, not a gospel. Take these three hands.

Hand a)	Hand b)	Hand c)
♠ Q 10 8	♠ J 6 3	♠ A Q 2
♥ K J 10	♥ A J 2	♥ K J 2
♦ A J 10 9 4	♦ K J 2	♦ A J 2
♣ 10 9	♣ Q 7 3 2	♣ 8 5 3 2

- Hand (a) is superb – a good five-card suit in a hand replete with intermediates. This hand is clearly worth at least 12 points. You should open 1NT.
- Hand (b) on the other hand is really grotty – no intermediates, no sequential high cards, and the barren 4333 shape. This hand is not worth 12 points and you should not open 1NT, rather pass.
- Hand (c) is a very poor 15 for the same reasons as (b) is a poor 12 – barren shape, no intermediates, no sequences. Your hand is worth only 12-14 points and you should downgrade and open 1NT.

If someone says, “You can’t open 1NT with (say) Hand (c) because you’ve got 15 points” (as though you’re in some way cheating), show them this Beginner Corner.

Google “K & R Hand Evaluator”. You can input a hand and it will tell how many points the hand is worth.

If you’re curious, (a) is worth 12.45, (b) is worth 9.55 (wow – that’s low), (c) is worth 13.50.

Andrew Robson is one of England’s best known bridge players. Andrew has represented England for some 30 years. His many competitive successes include winning the World Youth Team Championships, the European Championships, and the Gold Cup on no fewer than eight occasions.

Andrew has put his training as a schoolteacher to good use by heading hundreds of instructional seminars around the UK, many in aid of charity. He was appointed Officer of the Order of the British Empire (OBE) in the 2013 New Year Honours for services to bridge and charity. Later the same year he was the joint winner of Personality of the Year at the International Bridge Press Association’s annual awards. In 2018 he was a winner of the English Bridge Union’s Diamond Award, introduced to recognise players “in recognition of excellence and success over a sustained period for England’s international teams”. In 1995, he founded the highly successful Andrew Robson Bridge Club in South West London. He writes daily for the Times, weekly for Country Life and Money Week, and monthly for The Oldie. He is the author of many books on bridge, as well as instructional DVDs and online videos.

Andrew is married, with two daughters, and lives in London. When not bridging, Andrew loves long walks and bike rides.

This deal sees declarer able to use two of the three basic methods of card promotion (Force, Length and Position) to make his 1NT contract. He tried the third - oops

		♠ J 9 7 6	
South Deals N-S Vul	♥ J 2		
	♦ Q 5 4 2		
	♣ A 6 3		
♠ K 5	North West East South	♠ Q 10 8 3	
♥ Q 9 7 5		♥ 10 4	
♦ K 9 6		♦ A 10 8 7	
♣ Q 10 7 2		♣ J 9 5	

Establishing Tricks Through Force

from
Andy Robson

♠ A 4 2
♥ A K 8 6 3
♦ J 3
♣ K 8 4

West North East South

1 ♥

Pass 1 ♠ Pass 1 N¹

Pass Pass Pass

1. 15-16 balanced.

What happened

Winning ♣ 2 (to East's ♣ J) with ♣ K, declarer led ♦ J. He was (misguidedly) trying to force out ♦ AK, and to promote ♦ Q. But there were no Force Winners on this deal; ♦ Q and ♦ J was an insufficient sequence between the two hands - ♦ 10 and ♦ 9 were needed too.

West won ♦ J with ♦ K and continued with ♣ Q. Winning ♣ A, declarer next ran ♥ J, another misguided effort (you cannot promote a card if you lead it). West won ♥ Q, cashed ♣ 107, and switched to ♦ 9. Declarer covered with dummy's ♦ Q (it didn't matter), and East took ♦ A then ♦ 108. Declarer had set up no extra tricks and, losing a further trick at the end, garnered just his five top tricks, ♠ A, ♥ AK, and ♣ AK. Down two

(continued on page 4)



Queen with diamond,
Queen with heart,
Always keep your suits
Apart!

Note: We are no longer snail mailing any issues of this newsletter. Snail mail has become cost prohibitive. The newsletters are available online only at the District 13 website.

To access the site and find the newsletters, go to:
<http://acbl-district13.org/ArticlesAndNewsletters.htm>
Newsletters at this address go back to 2001. You can read them, print them, and enjoy them from there.

What should have happened

You as declarer count five top tricks (♠ A, ♥ AK, and ♣ AK). Focussing on your five-card heart suit, you have the possibility of length winners. First, though, you must try to promote ♥ J via a finesse. This means, crucially, leading from the opposite hand to the card, not actually leading it.

Win Trick One with ♣ K, so that you can lead towards ♥ J. ♥ 3 lead (key play) stymies West. If he rises with ♥ Q, you play dummy's ♥ 2 and ♥ J is promoted. Say he plays low: you play ♥ J and your 50-50 finesse succeeds (with West holding ♥ Q). Now try for length winners, by returning to your ♥ AK.

East discards on the third heart, but nil desperandum. Give West the fourth heart with his ♥ Q, in order to promote ♥ 8 as a length winner. Win his ♣ Q return with dummy's ♣ A, cross to hand with ♠ A, and triumphantly cash ♥ 8. Seven tricks and 1NT made.

If you remember just one thing....

Don't panic when left in 1NT. Look for sequences of three or more touching high cards, and/or a five card suit.

				6		5		2
							9	
2							6	8
	4				1			
5			2					
9		7			4		2	3
	5							
	1			2				
		3		5	9		4	

2	7	5	4	8	9	8	1	6
1	4	8	7	6	5	2	8	9
8	6	9	1	8	2	5	7	4
4	8	7	9	2	6	1	5	8
9	8	2	5	1	4	7	6	8
6	5	1	8	7	8	9	4	2
8	9	4	6	5	7	8	2	1
7	1	8	2	4	8	6	9	5
5	2	6	8	9	1	4	8	7

Christmas Tree

Find and circle all of the Christmas Tree words that are hidden in the grid.
The remaining 53 letters spell a secret message.

T S T N E S E R P D N L L A M S G
T O P P E R P I N E W I H R E D R
O T E V I T S E F C O G R E R N E
F R E S H C U T E O D H A T A A E
D D N A T S I G T R G T T A I L N
O S N A O F R H A A N S S W V R I
E S N N M A G A R T I F I C I A L
S E A O L E G N A E K C H R Y G S
A T M S I I N O I T A R B E L E C
H T S R E T T T R D T M A A N S S
C I S T A L A A S R E R G A R E E
R N E P O F D R E T L C C I H R L
U G K I R I E E O Y R Y E C F E G
P U I N T U L E E C D I N M S T L
N P A I U O C T R N E A K N B A S
E D O I T R N E A T R D I S E E G
E N S C E N T C R B M T A R N Y R

ANGEL	GARLAND	REAL	TOPPER
ARTIFICIAL	GIFTS	SCENT	TRADITION
BRANCHES	GREEN	SETTING UP	TREE FARM
CANDY CANES	LARGE	SKIRT	TREE LOT
CELEBRATION	LIGHTS	SMALL	TRUNK
DECEMBER	NEEDLES	SPRUCE	WATER
DECORATE	ORNAMENTS	STAND	YEARLY
DECORATIONS	PINE	STAR	
FESTIVE	PRESENTS	TAKING DOWN	
FRESH CUT	PURCHASE	TINSEL	

If you've decided to take up the game of bridge, you're about to discover the world's most popular and challenging card game. You're also beginning a learning experience that can truly last a lifetime, and any extra effort you can put into it now will make it even more enjoyable in the years to come.

Whether you've chosen group lessons, self-teaching and one-on-one instruction from a friend or relative, you'll learn the game faster -- and enjoy it more -- if you take an active role in your bridge education. It's difficult to become a good bridge player if all you do is listen passively to your weekly lesson and hope it will "soak in". Instead, make a commitment do some outside homework and practice. Try to devote at least a few minutes every day to some bridge-related activity, and make your learning process a "multimedia" one by taking advantage of lots of different resources. Here are some suggestions for learning activities you can pursue on your own:

Read, read, read

If you're taking a group class, your instructor has probably given you a textbook or lesson handouts. Most beginning bridge textbooks aren't intended to be light reading, so don't be discouraged if you don't understand the material at first. Keep your book handy (out on your desk, next to your favorite easy chair) and plan to read and study each chapter several times between classes.

You'll also benefit from "extra-curricular" reading. There are dozens of good bridge books written just for beginners, and you might be surprised to find that they're entertaining as well as educational. When I learned to play, I read every book I could get my hands on, but I found these three to be invaluable:

Five Weeks to Winning Bridge by Alfred Sheinwold. This classic has taught millions to play, and it's the very first bridge book I ever read. It's organized in 35 one-day lessons, but I read it in one weekend -- and then reread it several times. Sheinwold uses a 4-card-major bidding system, but you can easily adapt his principles to 5-card majors or any system.

Classic Book on the Play of the Hand by Louis Watson. This is the oldest and most comprehensive guide to understanding the cards, with a wealth of information on suit combinations, basic strategies and other principles of declarer play. You won't be able to read it in a weekend, or even a month, so plan to take it slow and study each chapter carefully.

Bid Better, Play Better by Dorothy Hayden (Truscott). One of the greatest bridge books of all time, this book focuses on teaching you how to think like a bridge player. Much of the material is aimed toward advanced beginners and intermediates, but even learners will benefit from Hayden's clear approach and practical advice.

There are a number of other excellent books for beginners and learners. A listing of recommended titles -- with short reviews and links for purchase from Amazon.com -- is available in the Bridge Bookstore on this site.

(Karen Walker, continued from page 5)

Read actively.

You may find it helpful to keep a notebook and a deck of cards with your class textbook and any other bridge books you're reading. Use the notebook to outline major points, create bidding diagrams or jot down questions for your instructor. The deck of cards is a great way to translate a textbook diagram into a "real" bridge hand. Deal out the cards to match the example in the book and play it out on a tabletop next to the open book. This exercise is especially beneficial if you're studying suit combinations from a book like Watson's *Play of the Hand*.

Play and learn on your computer.

Start with ACBL's **Learn to Play Bridge I & II**. These are free programs you can download and use to teach yourself how to play. The lessons emphasize card play, but you'll find a good introduction to basic bidding here, too.

There are also a wide range of bid-and-play software packages that simulate a "real" game. Although no program bids or plays like an expert, the programs are fun and they can be great teaching resources. They give you the chance to practice bidding and play -- with no time constraints, no limit to how often you can rebid and replay a hand, and no worry about disappointing a human partner. Some programs also have built-in lessons that you can use to teach yourself, even if you know absolutely nothing about bridge when you start.

Take advantage of Internet resources.

You'll find a wealth of instructional material on the web, ready to download or print. Many of these sites present lessons in interesting formats, including interactive quizzes, Javascript play and email lessons. You can find links to some of the best in the Recommended websites for beginners listing on this site.

Watch bridge videos.

Bridge instruction is also available in videos on YouTube and other sites. Several teachers offer a continuing series of free video lessons.

Develop your "card sense."

Many people believe that an aptitude for card games is an inborn trait -- you either have it, or you don't. While this may be true to some extent, any motivated, intelligent learner can develop these abilities. The article *Developing Your Card Sense* on this site will give you some suggestions for mental exercises and other activities you can do to increase your facility with the cards -- and be on your way to becoming a skilled bridge player.

Always pause *at least 10 seconds* before calling a card from dummy. This gives you time to think and it gives RHO time to decide on his play.

Suit: Count losers, then count winners. Identify which tricks in which suits you plan to take.

Focus on one hand as the “master hand” for counting tricks.

♣ In a 5-3 or 6-2 fit, it’s usually the long-trump hand.

♣ In a 4-4 fit, choose one hand -- usually the stronger hand **or** the hand that won’t ruff.

Look at each suit and count potential losers, then see if dummy can cover any of them.

If you have more losers than winners, it's often a sign you'll need ruffing tricks. Delay drawing trump.

Suit: If you need more than one ruff in a 4-4 fit:

Plan your entries so you’re ruffing in just one hand. Avoid taking ruffs in both hands unless you’re setting up a full cross-ruff where you don’t plan to draw trumps.

If you must lose a trick to set up a ruff, expect the defenders to lead trumps. Count your tricks after that.

Suit: If you plan a cross-ruff:

Cash side-suit winners early so opponents cannot discard those suits as you’re ruffing other suits.

Suit: To deal with a bad trump break:

Stop drawing trumps and work on setting up tricks in other suits. Try to leave at least one high trump in each hand.

If you have an outside trick to lose, lose it now.

If you have solid tricks in an outside suit, run it and let the opponent trump.

Suit: To deal with a forcing defense that shortens your trumps:

Try not to let the opponents reduce your trumps to a length shorter than theirs.

Consider using one or more of these strategies to maintain control:

Refuse to trump. Discard a loser instead.

Stop drawing trump and set up your side suit. Try to leave at least one trump in each hand.

Regain control by using a “forcing offense” – force them to ruff and shorten their trumps.

Notrump: Count winners and potential winners, *then* possible losers.

How many tricks can the opponents cash when they get the lead?

Predict which suit the opponents will lead when they get in.

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Notrump: If you're short of winners and have too many possible losers:

Good things often happen when you run your long suit first. Watch their discards.

If possible, make your discards in the suit you want them to discard. Try to make it appear that you aren't looking for extra tricks in that suit.

Pay special attention to the defenders' spot cards on the first few tricks – the opening leader's card and his partner's if he wins the lead and returns the suit.

Create a mental picture of the layout of that suit – length and honor holdings in each hand.

Identify the “danger hand” if there is one -- the defender whom you want to keep from gaining the lead.

Always look for information from “the count”.

Watch the defenders' plays and try to count how many high-card points each hand has and the number cards they have in the suits you plan to lead.

Use the principle of “empty spaces” to make inferences about suit lengths and honor locations.

Use discovery plays to learn more about the defenders' distribution and high-card points.

If possible, delay a critical decision until you can get a better picture of the layout of that suit.

Think like a defender.

Based on the bidding and the play so far, what do they know about your hand? What do they know about each other's hands?

What suit are they likely to discard or lead if they get the opportunity?

Try to interfere with the defenders' communication.

1 - Signal the same way they do. If they play standard signals and:

♣ You want them to stop leading that suit – follow with your lowest card. You want the leader to think his partner has played his lowest card, so don't conceal your low spots.

♣ You want them to continue leading that suit – follow with the highest spot card you can afford. You want the leader to think his partner has lower cards and is signaling for a continuation.

2 - When discarding, try to show a lack of interest in the suit where you hope to establish extra tricks. Discard the suit you want the opponents to discard.

3 - If possible, conceal low spot cards when you're winning a trick.

Example: LHO leads the 3 and you have **AK5** in dummy, **Q62** in your hand. You win dummy's ace and RHO follows with the 4. **Drop the 6 from your hand.**

By concealing your 2, your RHO won't know if his partner has led from a 4-card or 5-card suit **and** your LHO won't know if his partner's 4 is an encouraging signal.

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(Continued from page 8)

4 - On a defender's lead, if you have a choice of cards that will win the trick:

- ♣ If you want to encourage them to lead that suit again, play the card you're known to hold.
- ♣ If you want to discourage them from leading that suit again, win cheaply.

Example: After LHO leads the 2 and RHO plays the Queen (**2, 3, Q**):

If you hold **AK10**, win the **Ace** (the card you're known to hold, as RHO would win the Ace if he had it). You want LHO to lead the suit again. Give him a reason to believe his partner might have the King **or** the 10.

If you hold **AKx**, win the **King**. You want them to know you have AK. If LHO started with Jxxxx, he'll be hesitant to lead the suit again because he doesn't know who holds the 10.

Karen Walker is a National Champion who lives in Champaign-Urbana, Illinois. She is the editor of the District 8 newsletter and the chairman of the annual Champaign Regional.

Karen serves on the ACBL Disciplinary Committee, writes a regular column for the ACBL monthly bulletin, and is a great volunteer in the organization.

She and her husband, fondly known as "Puppy," do a great amount of travelling.

To hone your skills and to learn more about the game, go to Karen's website at: kwbridge.com.

As a bonus, you can see pictures and reflections from their many travels!!

Karen and hubby, Mike Halvorsen



Watch for Information on Flight C GNT

We will keep you updated on dates and times!

Milwaukee Holiday

Sectional

December 28 - 31, 2021

Good Hope School - Room #26
(Follow signs to 4 Aces Bridge Club)
2315 W. Good Hope Road - Glendale WI



DIRECTIONS:
From I-43: Exit #80 Good Hope Road West for 1 1/4 miles
Turn left just before the tennis courts on the south side
From I-41: Exit #47 Good Hope Road East for 5.5 miles
Turn right just before the tennis courts on the south side.

We will follow ACBL and local regulations regarding Covid protocols

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 28

10:00 AM Single Stratified Pair/Teams
Stratified 299er Pairs
2:30 PM Single Stratified Pair/Teams
Stratified 299er Pairs



WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 29

10:00 AM Single Stratified Pair/Teams
Stratified 299er Pairs
2:30 PM Single Stratified Pair/Teams
Stratified 299er Pairs

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 30

10:00 AM Single Stratified Pair/Teams
Stratified 299er Pairs
2:30 PM Single Stratified Pair/Teams
Stratified 299er Pairs

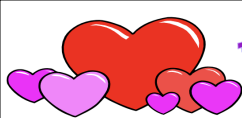
FRIDAY, DECEMBER 31

10:00 AM Single Stratified Pair/Teams
Stratified 299er Pairs
2:30 PM Single Stratified Pair/Teams
Stratified 299er Pairs

TOURNAMENT CHAIRS: Yvette Neary
PARTNERSHIPS: Yvette Neary (414-526-9035)
Email: yneary@gmail.com
IN Chair: Judy Burzynski (262-391-0970)



STRATA: Open Games 0-750/750-2500/2500+
299er Games 0-50/50-100/100-300



Valentine Sectional

Unit 222

FEBRUARY 9 - 12, 2022

GOOD HOPE SCHOOL (4 ACES BRIDGE CLUB) - ROOM #26

2315 W. Good Hope Road - Glendale WI

(The school is not visible from Good Hope Road)

From I-43: Exit #80 Good Hope Road West for 1 1/4 miles

Turn left just before the tennis courts on the south

From I-41: Exit #47 Good Hope Road East for 5.5 miles

Turn right just after the tennis courts on the south side. The drive will take you to the school.

Enter through the main door (#1) and follow the signs to the club.

ACBL Sanction #2002367

We will follow ACBL and local regulations regarding Covid protocols



Wednesday - 2/9: 9:30 a.m. Pair/Team Game & 299er Pair Game
2:00 p.m. Pair/Team Game & 299er Pair Game

Thursday - 2/10: 9:30 a.m. Pair/Team Game & 299er Pair Game
2:00 p.m. Pair/Team Game & 299er Pair Game

Friday - 2/11: 9:30 a.m. Pair/Team Game & 299er Pair Game
2:00 p.m. Pair/Team Game & 299er Pair Game

Saturday - 2/12: 9:30 a.m. & 2:00 p.m. BRUCE BROWN CUP OPEN PAIRS
9:30 a.m. & 2:00 p.m. - 299er Pair Game (Single Sessions)

TOURNAMENT CHAIR:
John Peres (414-559-3463) jperes@gmail.com
PARTNERSHIP CHAIR:
Yvette Neary (414-526-9035) yneary@gmail.com
299er CHAIR: Judy Burzynski (262-391-0970)

Strata for all open games: 0-749, 750-2499, 2500+
Strata for 299er games: 0-49, 50-99, 100-300
(Strats may be adjusted as attendance warrants)



Online Bridge Sites

Bridgebase Online (free) -- Designed by Fred Gitelman, this popular site is frequented by many expert-level players and offers lots of extra features, including partnership bidding rooms, teaching rooms, Vugraph shows and bridge columns and lessons. You can also play money bridge or enter ACBL-sanctioned games (nominal fee) and win masterpoints. The BBO home page has four solitaire bridge games you can play (against robots) without joining or logging in.

Okbridge (\$) 7-day free trial -- This is the oldest online bridge club. It uses a rating system to track your success and help you find compatible partners.

Swan Games (free) -- ACBL-sanctioned tournaments, online lesson sessions, practice tables, online broadcasts of live events, advanced rating system.

Jbridge.net (free) -- User-friendly Java2 graphic interface and several scoring options, including matchpoints and IMPs.

Bridge Club Live (subscription fee; 30-day free trial) -- U.K.-based club that supports play, kibitzing and chat through a Windows Java interface. Offers tournament games and EBU masterpoints.

Funbridge (subscription fee) -- Another site where you play individually, against the computer, through downloaded software or a phone app. You can then compare your bidding and play with others who played the same hands.

Hands for Everyone...

Dealer East. EW Vul.

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

West	North	East	South
—	—	1♥	1♠
Pass	2♥	Pass	4♠
Pass	Pass	Pass	

After cue-bidding to show a limit raise or better in hearts, North planned to bid three notrump if South rebid anything else at the three level. However, South removed that possibility with his leap to the spade game. South later said that he should have rebid three hearts to get the partnership to three notrump.

West led the nine of hearts against four spades. Declarer rose with dummy's ace of hearts and then led the ten of spades. East played the six of trumps. Declarer played the seven from hand, preserving the option of returning to dummy if trumps were two-two. At trick three, declarer called for dummy's five of trumps and was temporarily delighted to see East's king of the suit, as it looked like the suit was two-two. However, West's discard of a low diamond put paid to that hope.

Declarer was about to run his winners in the hope that he could exert pressure on East and guess the endgame when he cracked a small smile. Instead of that flawed plan, declarer cashed the ace and king of clubs before exiting with his two of trumps to dummy's three and East's four. East was endplayed because, no

matter what suit he played now, the result would be that dummy would score at least two winners. Declarer would make five trumps, a heart, three clubs and one winner from the queen of hearts, the king of diamonds or the ten of clubs.

You should note that, if declarer decides to run all of his trumps instead, then East should come down to two hearts and pitch the queen of diamonds. Then declarer will have to guess whether East began with six hearts or five.

Dealer South. EW Vul.

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

West	North	East	South
—	—	—	1♠
Pass	INT ¹	Pass	3♠
Pass	4♠	Pass	Pass
Pass			

1. Forcing

After this fairly simple auction, West led the ten of hearts. When East played the jack of hearts, declarer tentatively placed him with the three top heart honours. Declarer could see nine tricks and it seemed that he would have to rely on West's holding the ace of clubs to make his contract.

However, declarer saw a slight extra chance and decided to play for it. After winning the first trick with the ace of hearts, declarer drew trumps. Now came the key play: instead of playing a club, declarer took

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the ace and king of diamonds, then ruffed dummy's remaining diamond. Declarer got off play with a low heart. East took his king and queen of hearts but then had to play a club to give declarer his tenth trick.

Nothing was lost by this approach: if East had either a heart or a diamond left, then declarer would have ruffed the red-suit exit and played a club himself. The chance that East had 3=3=3=4 distribution was low, perhaps five or six percent, but the combined chance of West holding the ace of clubs and East his precise shape gave declarer about a six in ten chance of making his contract.

Dealer North. EW Vul.

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

West	North	East	South
—	1♣	Pass	1♥
1♠	3♦ ¹	Pass	4♥
Pass	Pass	Pass	

1. Shortage with heart support

This deal was played in a team match. One North jumped to three hearts and the other used the jump to three diamonds to show a raise to three (or five) hearts with a singleton diamond. Both Souths ended up in game.

Both West players began their defence by leading the ace and king of spades. Both declarers ruffed the second spade then led a club towards dummy, which saw the king of clubs win the trick. Thereafter, their paths diverged.

At trick four, the first declarer played the ace and king of trumps. The four-one trump division left the declarer with no winning continuation. He ruffed dummy's last spade and played a club to the ace, but East ruffed and played his fourth spade. After South ruffed and gave West his club trick, a further spade produced a trump trick for East; down one.

At the other table, declarer crossed to hand with a trump to the ace at trick four to lead a second club toward dummy. Unfortunately, East ruffed the ace of clubs but could do no better than play a second trump. Declarer won this in dummy with the jack, then ruffed dummy's last spade. Next, declarer cashed the ace of diamonds and led the ten of clubs to West's queen.

After ruffing the spade continuation in dummy with the queen of trumps, declarer cashed the king of trumps to draw East's remaining trump. Declarer then claimed two club winners for his ninth and tenth tricks.

Dealer South. Both Vul.

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

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

1. Roman Key-Card Blackwood

2. 1 key card

South reasoned that his partner would hold four or five trumps and a shortage somewhere and declarer's money was on the singleton or void being in spades.

West led the five of trumps against the slam. Declarer won this in hand with the nine and then advanced the queen of clubs. West won with the ace and exited with a second trump. Declarer was pleased to see that East followed.

Now South pinned all of his hopes on clubs being four-three and ruffed a spade in dummy. After discarding a low diamond on the king of clubs, declarer ruffed a club and got the bad news that the suit was five-two. South's next move was to ruff another spade and when East followed with yet another low spade declarer had to concede that he was one trick short of his contract.

Dummy was unimpressed when declarer complained of his misfortune.

Dummy retorted: "Instead of ruffing a spade at trick four, you should cash the king and ace of diamonds. Then, after using the king of clubs to discard your remaining diamond, ruff a club in hand. You would get the bad news that clubs were five-two, but this would be good news as well; when West discards a spade, this reveals his likely distribution as 6=2=3=2. So, after ruffing a spade in dummy, a diamond ruff in hand establishes a diamond trick in dummy. All that would then remain for you to do would be to ruff a second spade in dummy and discard your queen of spades on the good diamond."