

A MINOR SUIT SLAM

You deal yourself this hand:

| | |
|----------|-------|
| S | South |
| ♠ | Q94 |
| ♥ | AQ105 |
| ♦ | 2 |
| ♣ | A9764 |

You don't have much, but with 12 HCP, 2 defensive tricks and 9 cards in your two longest suits, you certainly have an opening 1♣ bid. West overcalls 1♠ and partner doubles. East passes and it's back to you.

Partner's double is called a negative double, showing tolerance for the unbid suits. You have a 4-card heart suit and a minimum hand. You rebid 3♥ and partner now rebids 4♣. What does that mean? He is supporting my original suit. Could it mean that his double was showing a very strong hand? When you make a normal takeout double in second seat and then bid your own suit, you are showing a hand of 18 or more points. This is called the Type 2 or Big Double. There is a guideline in bridge that says whenever partner makes a bid you don't understand – don't pass. Bid something and let partner clarify the bid. You rebid 5♣, and he raises to 6♣. His original double did express a big hand.

West leads the ♦6 and you see this dummy. Plan your play.

| | |
|----------|--------|
| N | North |
| ♠ | A85 |
| ♥ | 82 |
| ♦ | AK7 |
| ♣ | KQ1082 |


West leads ♦6

| | |
|----------|-------|
| S | South |
| ♠ | Q94 |
| ♥ | AQ105 |
| ♦ | 2 |
| ♣ | A9764 |

You have two spade losers and 3 heart losers. That's a lot of losers for a slam contract. You're going need some luck here. You can finesse the ♥Q and hope the ♥K is in East. Then you can trump two hearts in the dummy. You can also discard one of the losing spades on the good diamond. You have plenty of transportation to the dummy, so this gutsy slam contract depends on the heart finesse.

Win the ♦A and pull trump in two rounds, ending in the dummy. Discard a spade on the ♦K and lead a heart to the ♥Q. East plays the ♥3 and your ♥Q holds. Improbably, West plays the ♥J! on the trick. Now go back to the dummy with a club and lead the ♥8. East covers with the ♥9 and you win the ♥10. Now you can ruff the remaining red suit cards, take the ♠A and give up a spade to West.

This is the entire deal:

| | | | | | | | |
|---|--|------------------------------------|--|-------------------------------------|---|---|----|
|  | | N North | | W N E S | | | |
| | | ♠ A85 ♥ 82 ♦ AK7 ♣ KQ1082 | | 1♠ | X | P | 3♥ |
| W West | | S South | | E East | | | |
| ♠ KJ10632 ♥ J ♦ 10654 ♣ J5 | | | | ♠ 7 ♥ K97643 ♦ QJ983 ♣ 3 | | | |
| | | | | 6♣ S NS: 0 EW: 0 | | | |

You can see how this hand should be played by clicking on this link:

<http://tinyurl.com/y8pwuxko>, or copy and paste it into your browser. Click on the "Next" button on the bottom to advance through each trick. Alternatively, by clicking on "Play" you can play all four hands and see if you can make the hand on your own.