

BIDDING UP TO SLAM

East dealt and passed and your partner opened 1♥. West passes and it's your turn, holding:

N	North
♠	AK10985
♥	K
♦	7
♣	AJ1064

This hand has a lot of potential, assuming you can find a fit. You start with a reponse of 1♠. This is forcing and will give you a chance to assess South's hand when he rebids.

As you might expect, he rebids your other short suit, 2♦. Now you must make a forcing bid. The only bid available is 3♣. This is the fourth suit bid by your side and is 100% forcing for 1 round. It doesn't promise clubs, but in your case, your clubs are very good. Your partner rebids his diamonds. The 3♦ rebid shows 4 or 5 cards in the suit. Now is the time to show your six card spade suit. If you had rebid spades, originally, you could be passed. Now, over your 3♣, partner raises to 4♠. He he almost certainly showing 2 spades and a minimum hand. Of course he doesn't realize the nature of your hand. Now that your spades are supported your hand is worth about 25 points. You acutually have enough points to make a grand slam. You have all the suits controlled. What you want to know, first, is whether you are missing both red aces. You rebid 4NT.

Your are playing Roman Key Card Blackwood, so you hold 3 key cards: The ♠AK and the ♣A. South answers with 5♥, showing the two missing aces. You now know you have all the controls needed for 6♠. In order to be sure about the grand slam, you must find out if partner has the ♣K or if not, a singleton or void in clubs. There is no way to find this out. If you bid 5NT and partner shows 1 king, you won't know if it is indeed, the ♣K or the useless ♦K. You should settle for the small slam and bid 6♠.

Here is the entire bidding sequence:

<u>West</u>	<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>South</u>
		Pass	1♥
Pass	1♠	Pass	2♦
Pass	3♣	Pass	3♦
Pass	3♣	Pass	4♠
Pass	4NT	Pass	5♥
Pass	6♠	All Pass	

East leads the ♠K. How should you plan the play to take all 13 tricks?

S	South
♠	J3
♥	AQJ83
♦	AJ632
♣	9

East leads ♠K

N	North
♠	AK10985
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It should be obvious that the grand will depend on the trump split. There are two ways to play the trump suit. You could lay down the ♠AK and play for the queen falling, planning on discarding all your losing clubs on dummy's hearts. But if the hearts split 5-2, your last heart might not be good, which will leave one losing club.

The other way of playing is to first ruff one of the losing clubs with dummy's ♠3. Then lead the ♠J, tempting West to cover with the ♠Q if she holds it. If the queen doesn't appear, you'll play the ♠K, followed by the ♠A. You are only risking the overtrick, since you hold all the rest of the good trumps.

This is the entire deal:

<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: 40px; text-align: center; margin: 0 auto;"> 10 D </div>	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>N</td> <td>North</td> </tr> <tr> <td>♠</td> <td>AK10985</td> </tr> <tr> <td>♥</td> <td>K</td> </tr> <tr> <td>♦</td> <td>7</td> </tr> <tr> <td>♣</td> <td>AJ1064</td> </tr> </table>	N	North	♠	AK10985	♥	K	♦	7	♣	AJ1064	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>W</td> <td>N</td> <td>E</td> <td>S</td> </tr> <tr> <td>P</td> <td>1♠</td> <td>P</td> <td>1♥</td> </tr> <tr> <td>P</td> <td>3♣</td> <td>P</td> <td>2♦</td> </tr> <tr> <td>P</td> <td>3♠</td> <td>P</td> <td>3♦</td> </tr> <tr> <td>P</td> <td>3♣</td> <td>P</td> <td>4♠</td> </tr> <tr> <td>D</td> <td>4NT</td> <td>D</td> <td>5♥</td> </tr> </table>	W	N	E	S	P	1♠	P	1♥	P	3♣	P	2♦	P	3♠	P	3♦	P	3♣	P	4♠	D	4NT	D	5♥
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You can see how this hand should be played by clicking on this link:

<http://tinyurl.com/y9jwgjtn> , 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.

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