

## ♠♥♦♣ DECISIONS - DECISIONS ♠♥♦♣

North is the dealer and it is two Passes to you:

S	undefined
♠	AJ
♥	AKJ53
♦	A7
♣	K873

This deal is typical of competitive auctions where you must make critical decisions in the bidding based on incomplete information.

You have a fairly strong hand. It has 20 HCP but with two doubletons, it seems safer to open 1♥. You have a second bid if your Partner responds 1♠ or 1NT. However, West overcalls 2♠ – a weak jump overcall. Partner passes and East raises to 3♠.

This is discouraging. Partner couldn't even scrap up a double over 2♠? It seems the 20 HCP you don't have are evenly split between the two opponents. Plus, they have at least a 9-card fit in Spades. Since you are not vulnerable, you can venture a 4♣ rebid and at least offer your partner a second place to play.

As expected, West passes. But partner brings the contract back to 4♥. Your elation doesn't last long when East rebids 4♠. Now what?

You have 3 options. You can either pass, double or push to 5♥.

The double seems almost right. You have three Aces. But where is the 4<sup>th</sup> trick coming from. West's long Spade suit probably means he is short in Hearts, so your second heart trick is suspect. Your ♣K isn't a certainly, either. If they make 4♠x, they score 590 rather than 420.

Making 5♥ opposite a very weak partner is sacrificial. Since you are both non-vulnerable, you can't afford to go down 3 tricks, doubled. That's -500, worse than letting them make 4♠. You have 5 losers. It's unreasonable to expect 3 cover cards from partner.

That leaves "Pass" as the only other option. This option only loses if they can't make 4♠. There is no way to know that, but it still is the best option, under the circumstances.

West is the Declarer in 4♠ and your Partner leads the ♥2:

E	undefined
♠	1062
♥	8
♦	K1054
♣	AJ654

S	undefined
♠	AJ
♥	AKJ53
♦	A7
♣	K873

You see the Heart singleton in the dummy and should feel better about the decision to Pass. You win the ♥K and lead a low Heart back to Partner. West will ruff in the dummy and cash his ♣A. You play low and West plays the ♣Q on the trick. This should indicate that West started with only one Club. This is more indication that you couldn't beat the contract.

Back in his hand, West should lead his last Heart, the ♥Q, for another dummy ruff. This also allows West to lead a Spade through the "known" ♠A in your South hand. You play the ♠J and West wins his ♠Q.

Finally, West leads a small Diamond, finessing the ♦10. You win the ♦A, but the ♠A is the only other trick you can take. You can try playing the ♥A, but West ruffs and pulls the remaining trump, claiming 10 tricks.

In the double dummy analysis, 4♠ scores -420, 4♠x scores -590 and 5♥x scores -500.

This is the entire deal:

D		N undefined	W	N	E	S
1		♠ 94 ♥ 10742 ♦ Q863 ♣ 1092	2♠ P P 4♥ P P	P P P 3♣ P 4♣	P P 4♥ 4♣ P P	1♥ 4♣ P
W undefined			E undefined			
♠ KQ8753 ♥ Q96 ♦ J92 ♣ Q			♠ 1062 ♥ 8 ♦ K1054 ♣ AJ654			
		S undefined				
		♠ AJ ♥ AKJ53 ♦ A7 ♣ K873				
			4♠ W		NS: 0 EW: 0	

You can see how this hand should be played by clicking on this link: <https://tinyurl.com/28bcsze3>, or copy and paste it into your browser. Click on the "Next" button on the bottom to advance through each trick. If you don't want to see the opponents hands, click on the white area in the South hand before you start.

Alternatively, by clicking on "Play" you can play all four hands and see if you can make the hand on your own.