

FIND THE MISSING JACK

You are sitting in South and have this hand:

South
 ♠62
 ♥K106
 ♦AJ6
 ♣KQ874

West	North	East	South
	1♦	Pass	2♣ (1)
Pass	4NT (2)	Pass	5♠ (3)
Pass	6♣ (4)	All Pass	

- (1) Whether you are playing **2 over 1 Game Force** or **Standard American**, your response to your partner's opening bid of 1♦ is 2♣. You haven't yet found a suit but you want to let partner know you have a good hand. In Standard American it promises 10 or more points and in 2 over 1, it is forcing to game. Either way it is forcing for one round.
- (2) Your partner must have a sensational hand. He knows he has controls in all the suits and now just wants to know about your *key cards*.
- (3) In the type of Blackwood you are playing, there are five *key cards*: the four aces and the king of trump. 5♥ would say you have 2 key cards **without** the queen of trump; 5♠ says you have two key cards **with** the queen of trump.
- (4) Your partner now knows you have sufficient controls and enough key cards to make a slam.

West leads the ♠J and you see this beautiful dummy:

	North
	♠KQ
	♥A
	♦KQ10864
	♣A1095
West	
♠J	
	South
	♠62
	♥K106
	♦AJ6
	♣KQ874

What's your plan?

You couldn't have asked for more from your partner. You have 1 spade loser that you can't do anything about. Your two heart losers are slow losers. You can discard them on the long diamonds in the dummy. You have no diamond losers. But you cannot afford to lose a club to the ♣J. If the

outstanding clubs break 2-2 or 3-1 you have no problem. If they break 4-0 you will have to finesse against the opponent with the clubs, whomever it turns out to be. Your key holding of the ♣109. There is only one significant club outstanding. Therefore, the correct play is to win the spade continuation and lead a low club to the ♣K. If both defenders follow suit you only need to pull the remaining trump and run the diamonds, discarding the ♥106. If one shows out you still have a two way finesse and you can easily pick up the ♣J.

This is the complete board:

D		N North		W N E S	
1		♠ KQ		1♦ P 2♣	
		♥ A		P 4NT P 5♠	
		♦ KQ10864		P 6♣ P P	
		♣ A1095		P	
W West				E East	
♠ J10954				♠ A873	
♥ Q8532				♥ J974	
♦ 92				♦ 73	
♣ 2				♣ J63	
		S South			
		♠ 62			
		♥ K106			
		♦ AJ5			
		♣ KQ874			
				6♣ S NS: 0 EW: 0	

If you would like to see the whole hand played out, click on this link: <http://tinyurl.com/qbcfhzp>

Or copy and paste it into your browser. Click on the "Next" button on the bottom to advance through each trick.

However, what if you were missing the ♣10. Now the correct play is to take the ♣A first, planning to finesse the ♣9, if the clubs break 4-0 and it is East that holds the clubs. If West holds the four clubs, there is nothing you can do. You are going to be set. Of course, if both opponents play to the first club, you just pull them from the top, as before.

This is the alternate configuration. If you would like to see how the contract is made without the ♣10, click on <http://tinyurl.com/pw983sj>.

D		N North		W N E S	
1		♠ KQ		1♦ P 2♣	
		♥ A		P 4NT P 5♠	
		♦ KQ10864		P 6♣ P P	
		♣ A653		P	
W West				E East	
♠ J10954				♠ A873	
♥ Q8532				♥ J974	
♦ 932				♦ 7	
♣				♣ J1082	
		S South			
		♠ 62			
		♥ K106			
		♦ AJ5			
		♣ KQ974			
				6♣ S NS: 0 EW: 0	