

HOLDING THE MASTER SUIT

You are the dealer with this hand:

S	South
♠	QJ1042
♥	Q965
♦	J
♣	KJ6

Naturally, you will pass. But LHO opens 1♦ and partner makes a take-out double. Your RHO redoubles. What do you do?

East's redouble is a general bid showing 10 or more HCP's. It tells his partner that they have the majority of the points and will either win the auction or will double us for penalty.

Now it's your time to tell partner two things about your hand. First, that you hold at least four spades and second, that you have between 9 and 11 HCP. If you just advance the double with a minimum 1♠ you are promising no more than 8 HCP. You must jump to 2♠ to accurately describe your hand.

Your bid is passed out over to East who now shows support for his partner's diamond suit. He rebids 3♦. You have extras that you didn't show in your first bid. You have 5 spades and a probably 9-card fit. In addition, you have only 1 diamond loser because of your singleton in their suit. You should bid to the law of total tricks and rebid 3♠.

West pushes up to 4♦ and your partner complete the bidding with 4♠.

Since he passed your 2♠ bid, he is probably sacrificing. When you are bidding spades over the opponents, you are fortunate to hold the "master suit". This means you can out-bid the opponents without increasing the level.

This is the full deal:

11 D	N North ♠ A763 ♥ AJ87 ♦ 106 ♣ 983	W N E S 1♦ X XX 2♠ P P 3♦ 3♣ 4♦ 4♣ P P
	W West ♠ K9 ♥ K2 ♦ KQ8732 ♣ 1075	E East ♠ 85 ♥ 1043 ♦ A954 ♣ AQ42
	S South ♠ QJ1042 ♥ Q965 ♦ J ♣ KJ6	4♠ S NS: 0 EW: 0

West leads the ♦K. Can you make 4♠?

North's double was made on only 9 HCP. This is not standard. But he holds four cards in both majors along with the aces in each suit. He was intending to pass whichever major suit you bid. You have only 19 HCP against the opponent's 21 HCP. You are going to need some luck. But there are several finesses available. You'll have to take advantage of all of them.

Win the second diamond in your hand and lead the ♠Q. If West doesn't cover it, you can afford to lead the ♠J. Now, all the trump are out. It's time to try the heart finesse. Lead a low card to the ♥J in dummy. Don't lead the ♥Q. If West holds the ♥K he will cover and you will lose an extra heart. The ♥J does win and you come back to your hand with a small club to your ♣J. If East doesn't put up his ♣A, play another heart to the dummy and West will have to play his ♥K. Play a second club to your hand. East will surely put up the ♣A and you will discard the ♣6. You will lose only the two minor suit aces. That's 5♠ on 19 HCP!

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

<http://tinyurl.com/zmh5f5p> 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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