

♠♥♦♣ INCREASE YOUR CHANCES ♠♥♦♣

This is the hand you pick up as dealer:

S	South
♠	AJ3
♥	K10
♦	KQJ107
♣	AQ4

You have 20 HCP and open 2NT. Partner raises you to 4NT. This is not Blackwood. It is a quantitative raise, inviting you to bid 6NT if you have have 21 points. You can add one more point for the good 5-card Diamond suit, so you will accept the invitation and rebid 6NT. With 13 HCP, North could have immediately raised to 6NT.

West leads the ♠10. How do you plan to make your contract?

N	North
♠	KQ6
♥	A952
♦	A98
♣	652

West's Lead: ♠10

S	South
♠	AJ3
♥	K10
♦	KQJ107
♣	AQ4

You start by counting the top tricks. You have 3 Spades, 2 Hearts, 5 Diamonds and 1 Club. That's 11 top tricks and you must come up with one more.

The Club finesse is the obvious possibility. But finesses are a 50% probability. Can you increase your chances?

There are no more possibilities in the pointed suits. You've only got 8 cards in those suits and you've already counted them for 8 tricks. But the Heart suit is worth looking at. You are missing the ♥QJ, but you do have the ♥AK109. If those four Hearts were

in the same hand, you would easily recognize a double finesse possibility. The fact that they are somewhat separated shouldn't deter you to try finessing in the Heart suit.

Win the initial Spade lead in the dummy and lead a small Heart to your ♥10. If West wins with the ♥Q or ♥J, win the return and play the ♥A and ♥K. This is a winning line if the remaining honor is singleton, doubleton or tripleton. Your ♥9 gives you the 3rd Heart trick on which you can discard your ♣Q.

If both outstanding Heart honors are in East, and East plays low on the first Heart, your ♥10 immediately provides the 12th trick. If East splits his honors (best play), you win your ♥K and force out the remaining honor. If all this fails because of weird distribution, you can always fall back on the Club finesse.

This is the entire deal:

173 D	N North	W	N	E	S
	♠ KQ6 ♥ A952 ♦ A98 ♣ 652	P	4NT	P	2NT 6NT
W West		E East			
♠ 10987 ♥ J863 ♦ 42 ♣ KJ9		♠ 542 ♥ Q74 ♦ 653 ♣ 10873			
	S South	6NT S NS: 0 EW: 0			
	♠ AJ3 ♥ K10 ♦ KQJ107 ♣ AQ4				

You can see how this hand should be played by clicking on this link: <https://tinyurl.com/yhe22lz8>, 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.