

## MAKING A TRY FOR SLAM

You are sitting South with this hand:

South  
 ♠ KQJ42  
 ♥ 4  
 ♦ AJ10  
 ♣ AK102

You are vulnerable and East passes to you. You count 18 HCP and open 1♠. The opponents are silent and partner responds with a forcing 1NT, denying more than 12 points. This is the 2 over 1 system bid. You should show this powerhouse and by jump shifting to 3♣. Your partner jumps to 4♠. This shows a hand with 3 spades and 10-12 points.

You should now upgrade your hand. You have a 5-card spade suit and it is a quality suit. These features add 2 points. You have a singleton heart for another 2 points. Finally, you have a side 4-card club suit that is worth another 1 point. That makes 23 total points. When added to partner's 10+ points, you have enough for slam. Furthermore, you have a 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> round stopper in all the suits, so the opponents can't run the first two tricks against you. The only thing you must check is if partner holds at least 1 ace.

You bid 4NT and he responds 5♣. This is the key card blackwood response for 1 key card. The four aces and the king of trump are the 5 key cards in this system. Since you have the ♠K, he must have either the ♠A or ♥A. You can now bid 6♠.

West leads the ♥A and you see your dummy:

Vul: N/S

West	North ♠ A76 ♥ J10952 ♦ K3 ♣ Q94
♥A	South ♠ KQJ42 ♥ 4 ♦ AJ9 ♣ AK102

West	North	East	South
		Pass	1♠
Pass	1NT	Pass	3♣
Pass	4♠	Pass	4NT
Pass	5♣ !	Pass	6♠
All Pass			

Now, the only problem is making this thin slam. West leads the ♥A. You can't afford any other losers. You can get rid of a diamond loser by pulling only two rounds of trump and ruffing the diamond in the dummy (assuming spades break 3-2). But you also need to find the ♣J.

Assume West, not wanting to set up your hearts, switches to the ♦2. You should play low from the dummy and take the free finesse of the ♦J. Now you can pull all the trump and concentrate on clubs. Should you play for the 3-3 break (35%) or the finesse (50%)? Assume West started with about 4 hearts and exactly 4 diamonds (given the ♦2 switch), and he played 3 spades. That leaves him with only 2 clubs and therefore, the probability becomes overwhelming that the ♣J is located in East.

Go to the dummy with the ♠Q and finesse the ♠10 on the way back. This is successful and your vulnerable slam is in the bag. Luck, skill and chutzpah all contributed to a happy ending

Here is the entire deal:

2	N North	♠ A76	W	N	E	S
		♥ J10952	P	1NT	P	1♠
W West	S South	♦ K3	P	4♠	P	4NT
		♣ Q94	P	6♠	P	6♠
♠ 1083	♠ KQJ42	♠ 95	E East			
♥ AK76	♥ 4	♥ Q83	♠ 95			
♦ Q652	♦ AJ9	♦ 10874	♥ Q83			
♣ 83	♣ AK102	♣ J765	♦ 10874			
				♣ J765		
				6♠ S NS: 0 EW: 0		

You can see how this hand should be played by clicking on this link: <http://tinyurl.com/z7quzuc>, 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.