

PERSEVERANCE SAVES THE DAY

You are sitting North and you are the dealer. Would you open?

North
♠5
♥QJ42
♦AK10
♣J10765

Some would open 1♣ with this hand. You would be happy if partner responded 1♥ or 1♥. But most likely, he would bid 1♠. What is your rebid? It's dangerous to rebid 1NT with only one spade; rebidding your moth-eaten club suit doesn't look very appealing. Bidding hearts or diamonds is a reverse and shows a hand in excess of 16 points. It might be better to pass with this 12 pointer and see what develops.

East opens 1♣ and your partner overcalls 1♥, which is passed by West. You can't believe you heard correctly. Your hand now revalues to 14 dummy points. You can show this shape by "splintering". That is, making a double jump to 3♠. This tells partner you have heart support, a singleton spade and you don't want to stop bidding until you have at least reached game.

South gets excited now and after cue bidding for controls and checking for aces, settles for 6♥. West leads the ♣9. If you were now sitting in South, how would you plan the play?

	North	
	♠5	
	♥QJ42	
	♦AK10	
	♣J10765	
West		East
♣9		
	South	
	♠J87	
	♥AK10875	
	♦J64	
	♣A	

In a trump contract, you count the losers in your hand: you have 3 spade losers and a diamond loser. You can trump two of the spades in the dummy, but you still must deal with the diamond loser. The answer lies in the dummy's club suit. If the outstanding clubs break 4-3, you can set up the 5th club as a winner upon which you can discard the losing diamond. And if they

break 5-2, you can still survive if the long clubs are in East. This is the most likely split because of the ♣9 lead. It is more likely that the ♣9 is the top of a doubleton than the 4th card down from a 5-card club suit.

The first thing to do, after winning the ♣A is to give up the spade. You can't avoid this loser, so you might as well get it out of the way. Whoever wins the spade trick will probably lead another club. You win by ruffing in your hand. You must get to the dummy and the best way is to start by leading a low heart to the dummy's ♥J. You might as well be pulling the opponents trump while you transport yourself to the dummy. You musn't pull too many trump because you still need two trump to ruff the two spades that remain in your hand.

You noticed that West has played the ♣9 and then the ♣3; an echo indicating he started with a doubleton. Lead a top club and ruff it high in your hand. West discards a spade. Lead the second low trump to the ♥Q. Now lead another top club and watch what East plays. If he overtakes the club you will ruff; if he plays a low club you will discard the losing diamond and keep leading clubs. You will either ruff or discard your loser, depending on East's action. This technique is called a "ruffing finesse." Since you will keep repeating it until you get the need diamond discard, it is called a "multiple ruffing finesse."

Here is the entire deal:

<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; width: fit-content; margin: 0 auto;">D</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; width: fit-content; margin: 0 auto; background-color: #e0e0e0;">1</div>		<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">N North</div> ♠ 5 ♥ QJ42 ♦ AK10 ♣ J10765		<table border="1" style="font-size: small;"> <tr><th>W</th><th>N</th><th>E</th><th>S</th></tr> <tr><td>P</td><td>P</td><td>1♣</td><td>1♥</td></tr> <tr><td>P</td><td>3♠</td><td>P</td><td>4♣</td></tr> <tr><td>P</td><td>4♦</td><td>P</td><td>4NT</td></tr> <tr><td>P</td><td>5♠</td><td>P</td><td>6♥</td></tr> <tr><td>P</td><td>P</td><td>P</td><td>P</td></tr> </table>				W	N	E	S	P	P	1♣	1♥	P	3♠	P	4♣	P	4♦	P	4NT	P	5♠	P	6♥	P	P	P	P
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P	P	1♣	1♥																												
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P	4♦	P	4NT																												
P	5♠	P	6♥																												
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<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">W West</div> ♠ Q10943 ♥ 93 ♦ 9853 ♣ 93		<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">E East</div> ♠ AK62 ♥ 6 ♦ Q72 ♣ KQ842																													
		<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">S South</div> ♠ J87 ♥ AK10875 ♦ J64 ♣ A		6♥ S NS: 0 EW: 0																											

You can see how this hand should be played by clicking on this link: <http://tinyurl.com/k6f7uau>, 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.