

♠♥♦♣ PLAYING TRUMP JUST RIGHT ♠♥♦♣

You are the dealer in the South:

S	South
♠	AK764
♥	A865
♦	92
♣	Q6

You open 1♠ and partner responds 2♦. You are playing 2/1 game forcing, where his bid promises an opening strength hand. You bid your second suit - 2♥, and partner support for your spades with a 3♠ bid. You have nothing extra so you show that by jumping to 4♠. This is called "fast arrival". The faster you bid game the weaker your hand. If you had a medium or maximum hand, you wouldn't have bid game; you would have taken a slower and therefore, more powerful approach.

You rest in 4♠ and West leads the ♥K. This is probably from ♥KQ. You take stock of your chances when the dummy is displayed.

N	North
♠	853
♥	743
♦	AKQJ
♣	K75

West leads ♥K

S	South
♠	AK764
♥	A865
♦	92
♣	Q6

You have one spade loser if they break in the expected 3-2. You also have 2 heart and 1 club loser, assuming you will ruff one heart and promote one of the clubs. That is one loser too many. What to do 😞

You see the 4 diamond tricks in the dummy on which you can discard 2 hearts, but if you do that immediately, the opponent with the short spade suit may ruff the 4th diamond and you will be set. If you draw all the trump first, the winner of the 3rd round of trump will return to hearts and you will also go down.

The answer is to pull only two rounds of trump with the ♠AK. Now you can run the diamonds and discard the two hearts. Even if the opponent ruffs the 4th diamond it will be with a trump that they will win anyway. You are discarding a losing heart on the losing spade – a loser on loser play.

When they win that trick and return to hearts, you will only have one heart left. You can ruff the next heart and promote the good club trick. All you lose are one spade, one heart and one club.

Look at the entire deal:

11		N North		W N E S	
D		♠ 853		P	2♦ P 1♠
		♥ 743		P	P 2♥
		♦ AKQJ		P	3♠ P 4♠
		♣ K75		P	P P
W West		E East			
♠ Q102		♠ J9			
♥ KQJ9		♥ 102			
♦ 10843		♦ 765			
♣ 94		♣ AJ10832			
		S South			
		♠ AK764			
		♥ A865			
		♦ 92			
		♣ Q6			
		4♠ S		NS: 0 EW: 0	

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

<https://tinyurl.com/rm3r492> , 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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