

♠♥♦♣ PLAYING WITH GOOD TECHNIQUE ♠♥♦♣

East dealt and opened 2♠. This is your hand:

S	South
♠	A742
♥	KQ7543
♦	10
♣	A2

Don't you hate it when they preempt you? That's why I love to pre-empt myself. I know what it means to be on the receiving end. In this case, I have a clear 3♥ overcall. With 13 HCP and a 6-card suit myself, I feel relatively safe. The shape of my hand is also a plus. West passes and partner raises me to 4♥.

West leads his partner's suit with the ♠10. This is the dummy:

N	North
♠	K6
♥	J862
♦	AJ
♣	Q9543

West leads ♠10

S	South
♠	A742
♥	KQ7543
♦	10
♣	A2

It shouldn't be too hard to take 10 tricks, even if West gets a spade ruff, since his ♠10 must be a singleton and the ♥A could be in the East hand. But when playing matchpoints, it is critical to get overtricks. Just matching other pairs will only get you average scores. You should always be looking for the slight edge – the extra trick that no one else found. Do you see a way to take 11 tricks, assuming the opponents win the ♥A and get a spade ruff?

If you win the spade lead and go right to hearts, East will win the ♥A and lead another spade to West's trump. Then West will lead a diamond. This leaves you to play clubs yourself. No matter who holds the ♣K, you will lose 1 club. The trick here, is before touching trump, eliminate the diamond suit. Play the ♦A and ruff the ♦J. Now, when West get in with the ruff, he is employed; he will have no more hearts or spades. If he leads a diamond, you get a ruff in the dummy and a discard of the losing club in your hand. He won't do that. He will lead a club, hoping that his partner has the ♣A. Fortunately, he has to lead away from the ♣K and you put up dummy's ♣Q for your 11th trick.

This deal shows the difference between just declaring the hand and declaring with good technique.

Look at the entire deal:

14 ^D	N North	W N E S
	♠ K6 ♥ J862 ♦ AJ ♣ Q9543	2♠ 3♥ P 4♥ P P P
W West		E East
♠ 10 ♥ 109 ♦ K96532 ♣ KJ87		♠ QJ9853 ♥ A ♦ Q874 ♣ 106
	S South	
	♠ A742 ♥ KQ7543 ♦ 10 ♣ A2	4♥ S NS: 0 EW: 0

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

<https://tinyurl.com/vq7j4sb> , 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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