

## ♠♥♦♣ READING THE SIGNALS ♠♥♦♣

In this deal, you are sitting East and North, your RHO, opens 1♣.

<b>E</b>	<b>East</b>
♠ A92	
♥ AK42	
♦ KJ752	
♣ 7	

With 15 HCP and a singleton club, you double. This is the next round of bidding:

West	North	East	South
	1♣	Dbl	Redbl
3♥	3♠	??	

Over the redouble, West's heart bid is weak, showing long hearts but few points. South's redouble showed 10 or more points and the balance of power. It also implies 4 cards in the other major – spades. Had South's bid been weak, then 3♥ by West would have been strong. We never make weak bids over weak bids.

North's bid of 3♠ confirms a fit in spades. Now it's back to you. Your defensive power is suspect. Half of your points are in hearts which the opponents will be short in. Aside from the 1 spade winner, the rest of the trick taking potential is in a very finessable diamond suit. You want to declare in this deal and you will probably want to bid 5♥ over their next bid of 4♠. Make it difficult on the opponents and bid 5♥ in front of the 4♠!

South pushes on to 5♠ and you are on opening lead.

When you have a singleton and a probable entry into partner's hand (♥Q) it's better to lead that singleton rather than "your" suit. You might remove his entry prematurely.

What if you decided to lead a heart - which one should you lead? Lead the ♥K. Normally you lead ♥A from ♥AK, except when you lead partner's suit or a suit you've bid and partner has supported. The reason is that often you lead the unsupported ♥A in your partner's suit. The king lead tells him you have the ♥A and ♥K. This is the dummy:

<b>S</b>	South
♠	QJ84
♥	9
♦	A10984
♣	QJ4

<b>E</b>	East
♠	A92
♥	AK42
♦	KJ752
♣	7

## North (Declarer)

North, the declarer, wins in his hand and leads a spade up to the two honors in the dummy. Should you take your ♠A now? If you had ♠Ax, you should go up with the ace and try to get into partner's hand to use the little spade for a ruff. But holding ♠Axx, it is better to duck the first spade and watch partner's discard on the second spade. You will have to lead either a heart or a diamond to reach your partner. Let him give you some help.

You win the ♠A on the next spade lead and partner discards a small, discouraging diamond. What does that mean? Why didn't he discard a high heart?

The discarding rule in suits you have bid where partner is looking for a possible entry is: If you have the ace or king, signal encouragement in the suit. If you have the jack or less make a discouraging signal in the suit. If you have the J10xx(x), drop the jack, promising the 10, so partner can under-lead the AKQ. **If you have the queen, discard another suit.** Therefore, seeing the diamond, you know partner's entry could only be the ♥Q.

You lead the ♥2 and partner wins the ♥Q and sends back a club for the setting ruff.

This is the full deal:

D		N North		W N E S	
1		♠ K10753		1♣ X XX	
		♥ J3		3♥ 3♠ 5♥ 5♠	
		♦ Q		P P P	
		♣ AK832			
W West				E East	
♠ 6				♠ A92	
♥ Q108765				♥ AK42	
♦ 63				♦ KJ752	
♣ 10965				♣ 7	
		S South			
		♠ QJ84			
		♥ 9			
		♦ A10984			
		♣ QJ4			
		5♠ N		NS: 0 EW: 0	

Why did North open 1 ♣ rather than 1 ♠? The “which black suit to open with two 5-card suits” question has been raging for years. If the hand is strong enough to jump shift (17+) then open 1 ♣, and give partner a chance to respond at the 1-level with a hand that he might pass if you open 1 ♠. It’s also a good idea to open 1 ♣ if the clubs are strong, the spades weak, and the hand is a minimum. Reason: If partner responds 2 ♦ or 2 ♥, you would have to bid 3 ♣ to get the clubs into the picture.

On the other hand, a 1 ♠ bid gives LHO more of a challenge.

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

<https://tinyurl.com/y26hd3jc>, 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.