

♠♥♦♣ RUFF OR DISCARD ♠♥♦♣

Your partner is the dealer, and it's 2 passes to you:

S	undefined
♠	AKQ97
♥	J93
♦	K8
♣	K52

You have 16 HCP and a balanced hand. There are some who would open 1NT. I prefer 1♠. This hand is very "spade heavy" and if you can find a fit with partner, would play better in spades. West overcalls 2♥ and North raises to 2♠.

Now that you have found the spade fit, you can use Losing Trick Count. Your LTC is 6, which indicates you can invite to game. Bidding a side suit asks partner if he has help in that suit; and if he does, he should raise to 4♠. Without help, he would bid 3♠. You would like help in clubs, so you rebid 3♣. Partner jumps to 4♠.

West led the ♥A, Followed by the ♥K and ♥Q. East plays the ♥8 and ♥4 (in that order) to the first two tricks. What do you play from the dummy on the ♥Q?

This was the dummy:

N	undefined
♠	10642
♥	72
♦	A962
♣	A43

West's Lead: ♥A

S	undefined
♠	AKQ97
♥	J93
♦	K8
♣	K52

Partner provided the requested help in clubs with the ♣A. You still have 1 club loser to go along with the 2 hearts you just lost. It doesn't look like you have a problem. You'll just ruff the 3rd heart, pull trump, give up a club, and claim.

Whenever the play looks too easy, take the pessimistic view. If you ruff, say, with the ♠10, there is the chance that East will overruff with the ♠J. East played high/low echo to the first two tricks, indicating a doubleton. In addition, you still have an unavoidable club loser, so you will be set.

The trick here, is NOT to ruff the third heart. Rather, discard your losing club from the dummy, instead. Say to yourself, I'm going to lose the 3rd trick anyway, I'll just play a "loser on loser." That is, you'll discard the ♣ 3 and win the 4 trick, whatever they lead. After you pull trump you can ruff your 3rd club and claim.

This is the entire deal:

D	N	W	N	E	S
1	♠ 10642 ♥ 72 ♦ A962 ♣ A43	2♥ P	P	2♠ 4♠ P	1♠ 3♣ P
W	E				
♠ 5 ♥ AKQ1065 ♦ 1053 ♣ QJ7	♠ J83 ♥ 84 ♦ QJ74 ♣ 10986				
S					
♠ AKQ97 ♥ J93 ♦ K8 ♣ K52					
		4♠ S NS: 0 EW: 0			

You can see how this hand should be played by clicking on this link: <https://tinyurl.com/yfq8m4l2>, or copy and paste it into your browser. Click on the "Next" button on the bottom to advance through each trick. If you don't want to see the opponents hands, click on the white area in the South hand before you start.

Alternatively, by clicking on "Play" you can play all four hands and see if you can make the hand on your own.