

SIGNALING IN THE BIDDING

West deals and opens 2♣. The bidding proceeds:

West	North	East	South
2♣	Pass	2♦	Pass
2♠	Pass	4♠	Pass
4NT	Pass	5♣	?

This is your hand:

S	South
♠	106
♥	A106
♦	Q7
♣	AQ8632

If you are in automatic and pass, the bidding will continue:

West	North	East	South
2♣	Pass	2♦	Pass
2♠	Pass	4♠	Pass
4NT	Pass	5♣	Pass
5♠	All Pass		

East's reply to the Regular 'Blackwood ask' indicates he holds no aces. West must be off 2 aces and stops at the 5 level.

North will lead and he could lead any of the suits, including the trump suit. But you dearly want him to lead a club. Why? If the ♣K is in the dummy, you will get 2 club tricks to go along with your ♥A. If you are lucky enough, you might even get a ruff of the 3rd club if North started with only a dingleton or doubleton.

There is one sure fire way to get the club lead you desire. That is if you double the 5♣ bid. Whenever you double an artificial bid like the answer to the 'Blackwood ask', you are indicating that you like the suit and strongly suggests partner leads the suit when first he gets the chance. About the only reason he wouldn't lead it is if he is void in the suit.

Look at the entire deal:

8		N North	W	N	E	S
		♠ J98	2♣	P	2♦	P
		♥ 532	2♠	P	4♠	P
		♦ 65432	4NT	P	5♣	X
		♣ 109	5♠	P	P	P
W West			E East			
♠ AKQ73			♠ 542			
♥ KQ4			♥ J987			
♦ AKJ			♦ 1098			
♣ 75			♣ KJ4			
		S South				
		♠ 106				
		♥ A106				
		♦ Q7				
		♣ AQ8632				
			5♠ W	NS: 0	EW: 0	

You can see that with any non-club lead, West can win, pull trump and discard one of his clubs on the 4th heart in the dummy. You will win you're ♥A and your ♣A, but that's it. You need a club lead from North in order to take both the ♣A and the ♣Q. In fact, with this distribution, you would get a 4th trick by leading your 3rd club. Either North would get the ruff, or if West goes up with one of his honors, that will set up partner's ♠J as a winner. This ruffing technique is called an "uppercut." It acknowledges declarer's ability to ruff, but because it must be higher than your partner's trump, it promotes one of his honors that would have normally been a loser.

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

<http://tinyurl.com/y87y5f8l>, 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.