

## TAKING A CHANCE ON SLAM

Your partner deals and opens 1♦. East and West are silent but your response is a forcing 1♠.

<b>S</b>	South
♠	KJ874
♥	A97
♦	
♣	KJ954

Partner rebids 3♠. His jump in your suit shows a medium strength hand and 4-card spade support. Your 12 HCP hand is now worth about 5 more points. The void is worth 4 points and the 5-card club suit is worth another point. There are now more than enough points to support a slam contract. Also, you have stoppers in all the suits. Your only problem is finding the aces.

You rebid 4NT asking for aces. Partner responds 5♠. In this Key Card Blackwood system, 5♠ shows two key cards and the ♠Q. You would have liked to have partner exclude the ♦A from his reporting, and there is a convention for accomplishing this; but you aren't playing what is called "Exclusion Key Card Blackwood."

You bite the bullet and rebid 6♠.

<b>N</b>	North
♠	Q1093
♥	84
♦	AQ6532
♣	A

West leads the ♥K

<b>S</b>	South
♠	KJ874
♥	A97
♦	
♣	KJ954

Plan the play so that you can make your small slam.

You have 1 spade loser, two heart losers, no diamond losers and 3 club losers. You can't do anything about the spade loser, so you must eliminate all the other losers.

You should notice that you can discard a heart from the dummy on the good ♣K. Then you can ruff the two heart losers. Since the defenders led a heart, you must do this before drawing trump. You must win the ♥A; unblock dummy's ♣A and get back to your hand with a diamond ruff. Now you can protect the heart suit by discarding dummy's remaining heart on the ♣K.

Your next focus should be on ridding your club losers. Cross ruff clubs and hearts with dummy's diamonds. You have 8 spade tricks if you use them separately. Luckily, after the first few ruffs, your spades are all high. The opponents can use their ♠A any time they want. They won't stop you from taking 12 tricks.

If West had started with a spade lead, East would have won his ♠A and returned a spade. That would have spoiled your cross ruff plan. Then you would have had to rely on developing the club suit, hoping for a 4-3 break. Since the 7 outstanding clubs do break normally, this line of play would have also worked.

This is the entire deal:

D		N North		W	N	E	S
1		♠ Q1093			1♦	P	1♠
		♥ 84			P	3♠	P 4NT
		♦ AQ6532			P	5♠	P 6♠
		♣ A			P	P	P
W West		E East					
♠ 5		♠ A62					
♥ KQ1063		♥ J52					
♦ K87		♦ J1094					
♣ 8762		♣ Q103					
		S South					
		♠ KJ874					
		♥ A97					
		♦					
		♣ KJ954					
				6♠ S NS: 0 EW: 0			

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

<http://tinyurl.com/ycu836p3> , 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.