

♠♥♦♣ TAKING ALL THE TRICKS ♠♥♦♣

As dealer you open 1♠ with this hand:

S	South
♠	AK987
♥	
♦	86532
♣	AK3

Your partner responds 4♦. What is this?

A double jump to a lower ranking suit is called a splinter bid. It says North holds zero or one diamond as well as 4+ card support for spades. Of course it is game forcing since it is at the 4-level. In addition to imparting all that information, it asks partner to reevaluate his hand in light of his diamond shortness. Having high cards in diamonds would be a negative. It means that those points would be irrelevant. It is a duplication of power and bodes poorly for slam evaluation.

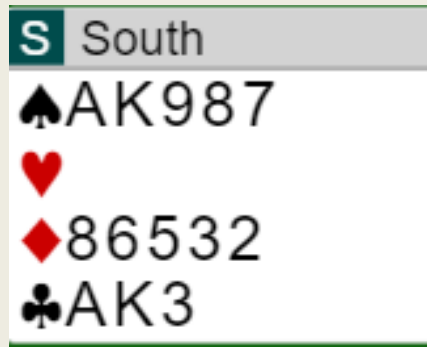
However, South has the perfect diamond suit for a splinter from his partner. He has 5 losing diamonds. At least 4 of them can be disposed of by ruffing in the dummy. Outside of diamonds, South's hand is a 2 Losing Trick Count hand.

Some would just jump to 6♠. Others, who use control bids to locate 1st round controls might bid 4♥ to show either an ♥A or a void. North retreats to 4♠. South can forge onward and show his club control with 5♣. North rebids 5♦ to show a void rather than a singleton in that suit. Most would stop here at 6♠, but this South took the less conservative route and bid 7♠.

West leads the ♦4 and the dummy come down:

N	North
♠	QJ1065
♥	KQJ105
♦	
♣	QJ10

West leads ♦4



What jumps out at you when you look at these two hands?

It should be the two voids in different suits. That means you can do a lot of cross ruffing. Furthermore, since you are only missing the ♠ 432, the defenders won't be able to overtrump you.

If you take the 5 trump in North separately from the 5 trump in South, you will get 10 tricks, total. You add the 3 club tricks and that brings the total to 13.

What could go wrong?

While you are doing all that ruffing of hearts and diamonds, the opponents will be discarding their clubs. And then when you get around to taking the club winners, they will be ruffed by those same defenders.

Which brings me to a critical rule in cross-ruff deals. Before you start the cross ruffs, you must take all the side suits winners. That means you take the 3 club tricks first. Then you start the cross ruffing and you don't care what the opponents discard or do with their trump. You have all higher trump that must take 10 tricks to add to the 3 you took in clubs already.

This is the full deal:

11 D	N North	W N E S
	♠ QJ1065 ♥ KQJ105 ♦ QJ10 ♣	P 4♦ X 4♥ P 4♠ P 5♣ P 5♦ P 7♣ P P P
W West	E East	
♠ 4 ♥ A9832 ♦ Q94 ♣ 9874	♠ 32 ♥ 764 ♦ AKJ107 ♣ 652	
	S South	7♠ S NS: 0 EW: 0
	♠ AK987 ♥ ♦ 86532 ♣ AK3	

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

<https://tinyurl.com/y2tvxs37>, 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.