

## THE POWER OF THE FIVE CARD SUIT

You are sitting in the South with this hand:

S	South
♠	AK975
♥	53
♦	74
♣	AJ108

East passes and it's up to you. You only 12 HCP but you have a nice spade suit and another nice club suit. You should open 1♠. Partner responds 1NT. Now you bid your clubs. Your partner raises your clubs and you bid them again, inviting partner to a game in clubs. He starts cue bidding controls. This shows interest in a slam. His 4♦ shows a 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> round diamond stopper. You don't have hearts controlled, so you bid your next control - 4♠. He now asks for the number of aces you hold with the conventional 4NT. Your 5♥ response shows two aces. He now bids 6♣.

This is how the bidding has progressed:

West	North	East	South
			1♠
Pass	1NT	Pass	2♣
Pass	3♣	Pass	4♣
Pass	4♦	Pass	4♠
Pass	4NT	Pass	5♥
Pass	6♣	All Pass	

This is the full deal:

14	N North	W N E S
	♠ 2 ♥ AJ6 ♦ AK62 ♣ Q7632	P 1NT P 1♠ P 3♣ P 2♣ P 4♦ P 4♣
W West	E East	
♠ J1063 ♥ K2 ♦ QJ953 ♣ K5	♠ Q84 ♥ Q109874 ♦ 108 ♣ 94	
	S South	
	♠ AK975 ♥ 53 ♦ 74 ♣ AJ108	
		6♠ S NS: 0 EW: 0

Your partner has much too much to only have responded 1NT to the opening bid. Perhaps he made a mistake and tried to compensate later in the bidding. Oh well, your job is to make the contract – not second guess your partner.

You have a possible trump loser, no diamond losers, 1 heart loser and 3 spade losers. You can trump the losing spades in the dummy. If the club finesse loses you will be faced with eliminating that one heart loser.

The opening lead by West is the ♦Q. You take that in the dummy and finesse the ♣10. This loses to the ♣K. Now you really have to have a plan to get rid of the losing heart.

You have a 5-card spade suit with 2 top honors. This will give you a heart discard, but you need get rid of another heart, as well. Whenever you are blessed with a long side suit facing a shortness in the opposite hand, you should think about setting up that suit using your trump suit to ruff the small cards. If the outstanding spades break 4-3, the 5<sup>th</sup> spade will allow you to ditch that 2<sup>nd</sup> heart from dummy's hand.

Win the opening lead and pull trump. Then take the ♦K and the two top spades. Ruff the third spade and return to your hand with a diamond ruff. Ruff another spade and come back to your hand with the second diamond ruff to play the 5<sup>th</sup> good spade, on which you can park the losing heart. The rest of the tricks are yours.

It's interesting to note that if North made his normal response of 2♣, the slam would have been played by him and the opening lead would have been the ♥10. That would have knocked out your ♥A, and when West won his ♣K, he would have return the ♥K as the setting trick.

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

<http://tinyurl.com/j27dyzn> 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

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