

THINKING DEFENSIVELY

In this hand you are sitting in West and North opens the bidding with 1♦. Your partner overcalls 2♥. This is a weak jump overcall and is very similar to a weak two opening. It shows a decent 6-card heart suit and less than an opening hand. Your RHO responds with 2♠. This bid promises at least five spades and at least 11 points. With less, he is better off making a negative double.

4♠ becomes the ultimate contract and you are on lead with this hand:

West
 ♠ 432
 ♥ 2
 ♦ KQ
 ♣ J875432

Obviously, you are going to lead your singleton in your partner's suit. When you do, you see this dummy.

North
 ♠ AJ7
 ♥ Q83
 ♦ AJ10765
 ♣ K

West
 ♠ 432
 ♥ 2
 ♦ KQ
 ♣ J875432

South

| West | North | East | South |
|----------|-------|------|-------|
| | 1♦ | 2♥ | 2♠ |
| Pass | 3♠ | Pass | 4♠ |
| All Pass | | | |

The dummy plays low and your partner wins the trick with the ♥7. He follows up by leading the ♥AK. You need two discards. What's your choice?

You could discard the ♣2 first to indicate you don't like clubs. This would signal a switch to a diamond, the only remaining suit outside trump. By the time he takes the 3 good hearts, you are looking for one more trick. But the

declarer probably has only 1 diamond and you may not make either of your diamonds good.

Why not take a surer path to the declarer's defeat. Discard the ♦KQ instead!

This is sure to get your partner's attention. If he doesn't give you a ruff on the 4th trick, find yourself another partner.

This is the entire hand:

| | | | | | |
|-----------|--|-----------|--|-------------|--|
| D | | N North | | W N E S | |
| 1 | | ♠ AJ7 | | 1♦ 2♥ 2♠ | |
| | | ♥ Q83 | | P 3♠ P 4♠ | |
| | | ♦ AJ10765 | | P P P | |
| | | ♣ K | | | |
| W West | | E East | | | |
| ♠ 432 | | ♠ 5 | | | |
| ♥ 2 | | ♥ AKJ1097 | | | |
| ♦ KQ | | ♦ 9842 | | | |
| ♣ J875432 | | ♣ 109 | | | |
| | | S South | | | |
| | | ♠ KQ10986 | | | |
| | | ♥ 654 | | | |
| | | ♦ 3 | | | |
| | | ♣ AQ6 | | | |
| | | 4♠ S | | NS: 0 EW: 0 | |

Notice that the diamond discards are the only way this contract can be defeated. When several discards are available, consider discarding from shortness, putting yourself in a position to ruff the suit you are discarding.

You can see how this hand should be played by clicking on this link: <http://tinyurl.com/mnax933> , 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.