

YOU'VE GOT TO TAKE YOUR SHOT

You are sitting in the South with this hand:

S	South
♠	AQJ9
♥	AK84
♦	A2
♣	KQ9

West deal and there are three passes to you. You have 24 HCP and a balanced hand. You should open 2♣ and plan to rebid 2NT over partner's response. Over your 2NT rebid, he bid 3♣, asking for a four card major. Since you have two, you bid the lower ranking suit – 3♥. Now he jumps to 4NT, asking for Aces. You are playing Roman Key Card Blackwood, where the king of trump counts as an "Ace." The five "Aces" are called key cards. You have 4 keycards and you rebid 5♣. This means you have either 1 or 4 key cards. Your partner rebids 5♥. This says he doesn't know whether you have 1 or 4 and if you have only 1 of the keycards, he wants to settle below slam. Of course, since you have 4 keycards, you raise him to 6♥.

West leads the ♣J and you see this dummy:

N	North
♠	K5
♥	J732
♦	KQJ754
♣	7

S	South
♠	AQJ9
♥	AK84
♦	A2
♣	KQ9

You are going to lose the club. West would never lead away from the ♣A. Therefore, you cannot afford any more losers. There is no problem with any of the side suits. Your only issue is with the trump suit. You are missing 5 hearts, including the ♥Q109. There is no way you can finesse against all of those cards. The only way to pick up all of these three possible winning hearts, is to play the ♥AK and hope that the suit breaks 3-2 and the ♥Q is doubleton. This configuration has a very low probability of occurring but it is the only chance for the contract to make.

East will win the ♣A and after winning East's return, you must play the ♥AK. If the queen falls and the suit splits normally, you can then pick up the last heart with the ♥J. If this doesn't happen, there is nothing you could have done.

This is the entire deal:

♠ 8	N North	W N E S
	♠ K5 ♥ J732 ♦ KQJ754 ♣ 7	P P P 2♣ P 2♦ P 2NT P 3♣ P 3♥ P 4NT P 5♣ P 5♥ P 6♥
W West		E East
♠ 108642 ♥ Q6 ♦ 10 ♣ J10862		♠ 73 ♥ 1095 ♦ 9863 ♣ A543
	S South	
	♠ AQJ9 ♥ AK84 ♦ A2 ♣ KQ9	
		6♥ S NS: 0 EW: 0

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

<http://tinyurl.com/h7u7f9z> 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. If you click on GIB, the software will analyze the hand and show the result for each opening lead.