

YOUR CHOICE OF TRUMP SUITS

East deals and there are three passes to North, your partner. He opens in 4th seat with 1♠.

S	South
♠	974
♥	QJ1062
♦	K9
♣	Q54

With 8 HCP you make a minimum raise to 2♠. Now your partner rebids 3♥. This has been agreed to be a long suit game try. When partner holds 16 points or 6 losers in Losing Trick Count, he can try for game by bidding a suit in which he holds 4 cards. If you don't have help in this suit you return to 3♠. If you do like the heart suit and can provide support, you either bid game in spades or support hearts. Any bid other bid at the 3-level is suggesting that you don't have help in partner's suit, but do have something to contribute in your bid suit. Since there is no suit between hearts and spades the counter suit option is mute.

In this hand, you not only can help in hearts, you want to play in that suit. You have a known 9-card fit in hearts and at least an 8-card fit in spades. Double fits can usually mean extra tricks. Your rebid should be 4♥. That way, partner can choose the suit he wants play in.

He passes your heart bid and 4♥ becomes the final contract.

East leads the ♣8. Take over for North and plan the play:

N	North
♠	KQJ32
♥	A543
♦	10
♣	A32

East leads ♣8

S	South
♠	974
♥	QJ1062
♦	K9
♣	Q54

Look at the North hand. He had 14 HCP but did hold only 6 losers: 1 spade, 2 hearts, 1 diamond and 2 clubs. When you bid 4♥, and not 4♠, you promised 4 hearts and willingness to play in hearts. North chose hearts because a 4-4 fit usually plays better than a 5-2 fit. This is because you can ruff in either hand and use the other suit for discards.

In a suit contract, you start by counting the losers in your hand. You have 1 spade loser, a probable heart loser, 2 diamond loser and 2 slow losers in clubs. You can try finessing against the ♥K if you can get to the dummy. You do have two extra spades in your hand on which you can discard 2 club losers. If the ♦A is in East, the dummy's ♦K can cover one of the losers.

Your first decision is what to do with the ♣8 lead. The probability that East is leading away from the ♣K is low, so putting up the ♣Q is relatively useless. Besides, if East does hold the ♣K you can finesse against it later with a lead of a club from your hand. Rather, play low from the dummy and win the ♠A in your hand and lead up to the K♦. West will win the ♦A and will return the ♠8 in an attempt to get into East's hand so he can lead another club through dummy's ♣Q. East wins the ♠A and if you are lucky, he will misinertret the spade lead and return a spade.

You win the ♠K and must give up on the heart finesse. Just lead the ♥A and another heart. East will take his ♥K and if you are again lucky, will play the ♦Q, expecting it to win. You will ruff in your hand, plull the last trump and discard the two losing clubs on the 4th and 5th spade from your hand.

This is the entire deal:

6♦	N North	W	N	E	S
	♠ KQJ32 ♥ A543 ♦ 10 ♣ A32	P	1♠	P	P
W West		P	3♥	P	2♠
♠ 865 ♥ 7 ♦ AJ842 ♣ KJ109		P	P	P	4♥
	E East				
	♠ A10 ♥ K98 ♦ Q7653 ♣ 876				
	S South				
	♠ 974 ♥ QJ1062 ♦ K9 ♣ Q54				
		4♥ N		NS: 0	EW: 0

The contract should have been set two tricks if East was on the ball. When partner wins the opening lead and returns a high card in another suit, he is signaling for a lead in the original suit. If he had shifted to a low card, he is signaling a return of the second suit.

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

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

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