

ALEX'S BRIDGE TIPS

1. The bidding has gone Pass-Pass to you. You have been dealt

S KQ1087
H 54
D 87
C J865

Open a weak 2S. Vulnerable or not vulnerable. And do it quickly, not after hesitating too long. This 2S bid will make it uncomfortable for the person in 4th seat. If you pass, she has all the room in the world to discover where they belong. Remember that it is very difficult for the opponents to double you at the 2-level. If LHO says Double, then her partner will have to respond as this is a takeout double.

Your 2S bid tells partner what to lead. While it may not net you many tricks, at least it is a safe lead. If you pass, partner has no clue what to lead and she may underlead her Diamond K743 right into Declarer's Diamond AQ.

2. 1D by your LHO. 2S by partner and a negative double by RHO, showing four Hearts (possibly more Hearts if RHO has only 6-9 points).

Your hand (as partner of the 2S bidder) is

S 6532
H 6
D Q732
C K965

Bid 4S. Quickly. This jams the auction and makes it so tough for your LHO. If LHO now bids 5H, they may have gotten too high because you were a big nuisance. They may even make 6 but they were unable to explore all the possibilities because you took away all the bidding room.

3. Pass by your partner who is the Dealer. 1H by your RHO. What will you bid with this hand?

S KQ107
H 76
D QJ84
C 543

Bid 1S. This tells partner what to lead. Just do it. This is when partner has passed to start with.

4. 1NT by your LHO. Pass by partner. 2C by RHO. This is your hand:

S 5
H 754
D K876
C KQJ86

Double. This is a lead-directing double, NOT a takeout double. Whenever they make an artificial bid (a fake bid), you have an opportunity to tell partner what to lead. BUT at a low level like this, note that the opening 1NT bidder might choose to pass so be sure to have length AND strength in that suit at a low level.

This differs from making a lead-directing double at high levels, where you only need strength but not length. e.g.

LHO bids 1H and RHO bids 3H (Limit Raise)

1H - 3H
4N - 5D

You are next to bid after 5D and you have

S 743
H 32
D KQ10
C J8654

Bid Double NOW! Opponents have agreed on Hearts, they will not be playing this in 5C doubled. So you only need strength NOT length. AND by doubling, partner now knows what to lead which may help your side versus NOT telling her what to lead and then partner might make a friendly lead which helps Declarer.



THE LANGUAGE OF BIDDING

Language is so very important. If you go to South America and ask how to get to the church ¿Dónde está la iglesia? is what you should say. If instead, you ask: ¿Cuánto dinero hace usted? You have just asked someone how much money they make.

If partner opens 1S and you have 13 points and you now bid 2S, she will think you only have 6-9 points. That is what you have communicated to her.

In bridge, we bid. This is also a form of communication. We advertise what we have in our hand, using a vocabulary of only 15 words. It is imperative that we use a language that partner will understand. You both have to be on the same page! Don't race in to play bridge at the last minute without any discussion. Partner cannot read your mind. You have to discuss style and bidding agreements. If you bid just on gut instinct (bidding by the seat of your pants), it simply cannot work.

Here are some examples of how the train can go off the tracks. What would you bid with the following hands (*RHO stands for Right Hand Opponent*):

1. 1S by RHO & you have

S AQ5

H K76

D A987

C QJ8

2. 1S by RHO & you have

S AQ5

H KQ7

D AQ98

C QJ8

3. 2S by RHO & you have

S KQ8

H AQ9

D K76

C K942

4. 1S by RHO & you have

S 9

H 83

D AJ765

C K10987

5. 1H by RHO & you have

S AQ7654

H 9

D 743

C 972

6. 1H by RHO & you have

S AK876

H 76

D Q98

C A97

Answers to quiz

1. If you were the opener, you would open with 1NT. As an overcaller, you will now overcall 1NT. This shows 15-18 HCP and a stopper in opponent's suit. (A double stopper is best but sometimes you aren't dealt such luxury.)

2. Now you have 20 HCP. You cannot overcall 1NT as you are too strong. Nor can you overcall 2NT as that will mean something altogether different (we will cover that momentarily). Thus, you must double first and then bid No Trumps. This shows a hand that was too big to overcall 1NT. It will show 19-20 HCP and a Spade stopper.

Example: **You are WEST in this auction:**

South West North East

1D dbl Pass 1H

Pass 1NT

3. Overcall 2NT. This will show 15-18 HCP and at least one Spade stopper. Note that this is not a **jump** to 2 No Trump. After a weak 2 opening bid by opponents, your bid of 2NT is never the **Unusual 2NT**.

4. There is a special convention designed to show this hand which is 5-5 in the minors when the opponents have opened with a major. This is called the **Unusual 2NT**. On this hand, it is perfect. Bid 2NT and advertise both your minor suits immediately, all in one breath. If instead you choose to overcall 2D first, what would you do later if LHO now bids 3S or 4S? You will never have a chance to show your second suit (Clubs) at a cheap level.

Suppose your partner has: **S xx H Axx D xxx C Axxxx**

If you bid 2NT (after 1S by RHO), then if LHO bids 4S, your partner can now happily bid 5C, knowing that together your partnership has at least a 10-card Club fit. This is a wonderful sacrifice against 4S, which likely makes.

Note that if opponents open 1 of a minor, then if you bid 2NT, it will show at least 5-5 in the two lowest unbid suits.

If opponents open with 1C and you as an opponent bid 2NT, then you are promising at least 5-5 in **Diamonds** and **Hearts**.

If opponents open with 1D and you as an opponent bid 2NT, you will be promising 5-5 in Clubs and **Hearts**.

5. If you were the dealer, you would open the bidding with 2S. It would show a weak hand: 6-10 HCP and a 6-card suit with 2 of the top 3 honors or 3 of the top 5 honors. As an overcaller, you should make exactly the same bid. Bid 2S.

6. Bid 1S. This shows 8-17 points (including distribution) and a 5-card or longer suit. If you have only 8-12 points, then you must have a sterling quality suit with 2 of the top 3 honors or 3 of the top 5 honors. It will show a suit you are proud of that you wish partner to lead. With 13 or more points, then lesser quality is acceptable.

Less experienced players often have a burning urge to say "double" first on this hand versus overcalling 1S. If you were to double instead and if your partner were to respond 2C to your double, you are not strong enough to now mention your Spades. (To double first and then bid your suit should show 18 or more points and a good 5-card or longer suit.)

Talk to your partner and try to stay behind at the end of the game to go over hands on which you had misunderstandings.

This will go a long way towards preventing the same problem occurring again.

SQUEEZING THE DEFENDERS

You can do it! The play we always hear about experts making! It is very satisfying when you successfully execute a squeeze play, so it truly is worth the bother to learn this!

A hand always contains some cards that are **busy**, and some that are relatively worthless or **idle**. When a player must discard a busy card (because he has nothing else), he is said to be **squeezed**. A squeeze is a way that declarer can create extra tricks when he is desperate.



For example, these are all different suits and hands that follow: You hold

- A52 - The 5 and the 2 are "idle" cards as the Ace needs no bodyguards to protect it from being "eaten".
- K52 - The 2 is an "idle" card, you can pitch it anytime, but the 5 must be retained to protect your King. The 5 is a "busy" card.
- Q752 - The 2 is an idle card. It is vital that you keep the other two cards as bodyguards for the Queen. They are "busy" cards.
- J852 - These small cards are all "busy" cards. The Jack needs three bodyguards to protect it from being consumed by the Ace, King & Queen. Try not to discard one of these.

You get the idea. Now...over to Declarer!

Supposing you are in a hopeless contract (or seemingly hopeless); maybe all is not lost. Maybe one of your opponents has to hang on to all their bodyguards, meaning they only have "busy" cards. As you run your long suit, you force them to make a fatal discard.

Example:

	Dummy
	D AJ
	C K
West	
D KQ	
C A	
	Declarer
	H A (you are leading this now)
	D 5
	C 4

You are declarer and you are down to a three card ending. When you lead the H Ace (this is known as the **squeeze card**), poor West has a huge dilemma. If he discards the Diamond Queen, your D Ace in dummy will fell the Diamond King and your Diamond Jack in Dummy will be high. If West pitches his Club Ace, dummy's Club King will now be high.

The DJ in dummy and the CK in dummy are both classified as "threat cards".

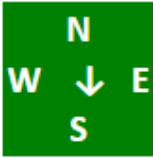
It is important to note that in the above scenario, if East had been holding **D KQ C Ace**, then this attempt to execute a squeeze would not have worked as the dummy (with the threat cards) would be forced to part with one of those threat cards prior to East having to decide what to pitch. i.e. If dummy pitched the DJ, then East could safely pitch his DQ. If instead dummy pitched the CK, then East could safely pitch his Club Ace.

Thus, this squeeze only works against ONE opponent versus both opponents.

Don't get too hung up on all this though, as you start out in the world of squeezes. When all else looks bleak, try running your long suit and just hope for something good to happen. Sometimes, at the very least, one of your opponents isn't paying enough attention and may simply discard the wrong card. This is called a pseudo squeeze!!

Let's have a look at a full hand: It is best if you lay out these cards at home and see what happens to poor West as declarer (south) plays each card.

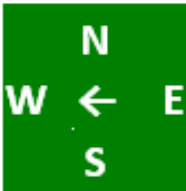
A Practical Example:

South Deals ♠ A Q 7 4 ♥ J 4 3 2 ♦ 7 6 3 ♣ 5 4		♠ 10 2 ♥ 10 9 8 ♦ 10 9 2 ♣ 9 8 7 6 3	
♠ J 9 8 3 ♥ 7 ♦ A K Q 8 ♣ K Q 10 2	♠ K 6 5 ♥ A K Q 6 5 ♦ J 5 4 ♣ A J		
$\begin{matrix} & 7 & \\ 15 & & 0 \\ & 18 & \end{matrix}$			
<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
			1 ♥
Dbl	2 ♥	Pass	4 ♥
Pass	Pass	Pass	

West leads DAKQ and switches to CK. It looks to declarer as though the contract hinges on spades breaking 3-3. Odds on the missing 6 cards dividing 3-3 are about 35%, whereas the chances of them breaking 4-2 are about 48%. Declarer does know that West has to hold the CQ as he led the CK at trick # 4. Odds are high that he has also holds four S in view of his takeout double. What if he has to discard one of these precious cards, either a S or the CQ. That would bring home the contract.

South won the Club Ace and drew trumps. Instead of playing S now to see if they behave, he led trumps, not just three rounds but **five** rounds.

Here is the 5 card ending:

♠ J 9 8 3 ♥ — ♦ — ♣ Q		♠ 10 2 ♥ — ♦ — ♣ 9 8 7
♠ A Q 7 4 ♥ — ♦ — ♣ 4	♠ K 6 5 ♥ 5 ♦ — ♣ J	

At trick 9, south (declarer) leads the H5 from his hand. This card is called the **squeeze card**. Poor West is up the creek now. Whatever he discards will help declarer. If he discards a S, declarer's S4 in dummy will now be high. If he discards the CQ, then declarer's CJ will be good.

Note that it was important to not first touch the S suit or entries would now be a problem. It is no good having the S 4 high in dummy if you have no way to get there.

Note also that even if it had been the East hand who held these cards, the Squeeze would still have worked. This hand is an example of a **SIMPLE** squeeze.

Nobody likes to feel helpless. It is a very frustrating feeling to be squeezed (at the bridge table anyway 😊) so now it's your turn to make your opponents feel helpless.

HOW TO COMPETE AGAINST PREEMPTS

*Exercises by Ron Klinger
Commentary by Barbara*

A) Your right-hand opponent (RHO) has opened **3D**. What will you bid on these hands (1 to 9), if anything? You are not vulnerable.

1	2	3	4	5
S K5	S A982	S AQJ762	S A2	S AK5
H 73	H AQ43	H J3	H QJ3	H AJ2
D AQ1064	D 9	D 43	D AQ2	D AK4
C KQ73	C AJ32	C KQ9	C KQJ32	C AJ97
6	7	8	9	
S KQJ2	S AQ83	S AJ87	S KQJ9	
H AQJ83	H J62	H AK8	H AKQJ	
D 9	D QJ97	D 62	D 3	
C AK6	C A9	C AQ52	C AKJ9	

B) You are **EAST**. South has opened **3H** and partner said "**Double**". **Pass** by RHO. Your bid. You are not vulnerable.

1	2	3	4	5
S 9532	S 6	S KQ72	S AQ9742	S 82

H 73	H 432	H J3	H 8	H K63
D Q1064	D J8764	D A964	D Q862	D AQJ4
C Q73	C 9753	C J95	C 52	C Q983

C) You are EAST. South has opened **3C** and partner said "**Double**". **Pass** by RHO. Your bid. You are not vulnerable.

1	2	3	4	5
S 96432	S 4	S 952	S Q972	S AQ72
H QJ73	H AQ2	H J3	H Q953	H KQ63
D 64	D J9764	D AK643	D Q82	D J43
C 73	C QJ93	C A84	C 43	C 32

Answers

A)

- Pass.** This is a trap pass. You have nothing you can say. Just hope it goes Pass-Pass-Pass. Or better still: If partner make a takeout double, then you can pass, converting her takeout double into a penalty double.
- Double.** Take the same action as if the bidding had gone 1D by RHO.
- 3S.** This shows at least a full opening bid.
- Double.** You have a big hand. If partner how bids 3S, you bid 3NT.
- 3NT.** You have a big hand and just want to play in 3NT.
- Double.** You have way too big a hand to just overcall 3H.
- Pass.** To make a takeout double with 13-17 points, you must have shortness in opponents' suit AND have support for ALL unbid suits.
- Double.** Just a classic takeout double.
- Double.** You have an enormous hand. If partner bids 4H or 4S, you will go to slam for sure, using Blackwood along the way. If partner only bids 3H, 3S or 4C, you can still now use Blackwood.

B)

- 3S.** This shows 0-8 points and at least four Spades
- 4D.** This shows 0-8 points ad at least 4 Diamonds
- 4S.** You have to jump. If you bid only 3S, partner surmises that you have only 0-8 points.
- 4S.** See # 3.
- 3NT.** You do not have a major. You have 12 HCP and partner has at least 13. This is enough for game. You have a Heart stopper. Bid 3NT and pray.

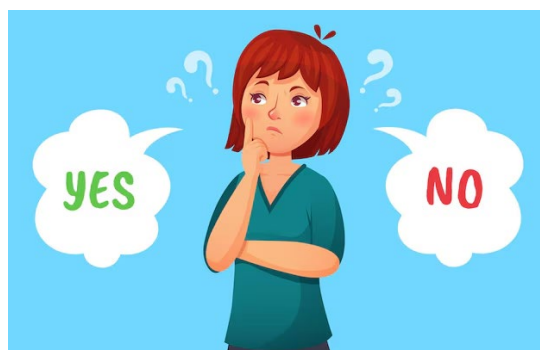
c)

1. **3S**. You are showing 0-8 points.
2. **Pass**. You are converting partner's takeout double into a penalty double.
3. **3NT**
4. **3H**. Pick the cheapest one when you have 0-8 points and both majors. BUT if one major is much better than the other, pick the better one.
5. **4C**. This asks partner to pick a major. You are saying you have both majors.

Preempts can be challenging to counter, but understanding when to pass, double, or bid can make all the difference. These exercises will help sharpen your judgment and ensure you have the right tools to handle aggressive bidding opponents effectively.

TRANSFERS OR STAYMAN? WHICH TO USE?

by Barbara Seagram



When partner opens with 1NT, we are now the captain of the hand and we are in charge of getting our side to the best contract. Two of the most commonly used conventions are Stayman and Jacoby Transfers.

It is important to know when to use each of these conventions, without getting them muddled.

Example:

S QJXX
H AQXXX
D JX
C XX

Partner opens 1NT. You decide to bid 2**D** to transfer to hearts and then bid 3NT to offer partner a choice of playing in 3NT or 4**H** depending upon the number of hearts she holds. The catch is that you will end up playing in 3NT when partner holds the following:

S AKXX
H KX
D AXXX
C QXX

Groan! You will be hard-pressed to make 3NT, but 4S is a fine contract. What went wrong?

You chose the wrong tool for the wrong job. Look what happens if we had used Stayman instead:

Transfer Auction

1NT - 2D

2H - 3NT

Pass

Stayman Auction

1NT - 2C

2S - 4S

Pass

Stayman definitely got us to the better contract in this case.

Here's the rule:

With 4 cards in one major and 5 cards in the other, you must use Stayman, not transfers. So, what will we do if the 1 NT opener responds 2 D ("No, I don't have a 4 card major") instead to our Stayman query? With 10 or more HCP, we would now bid 3 H, showing a five card H suit. Opener will wonder why we did not use a Transfer to start with and will now realize that you must have had five Hearts and four Spades in your hand. 3 H is now forcing and opener will raise to 4 H with 3 cards in that suit or bid 3NT without 3-card support.

If you had owned only 8 or 9 HCP, you would have next bid 2 H after opener's 2 D response. This would show five Hearts, four Spades and 8 or 9 HCP. Opener could then decide what to do next.

The above does NOT apply if you are playing the Smolen convention.

What will you do as responder to 1 NT when you have two five card majors?

S KQXXX

H AQXXX

D X

C XX

You have two five card majors in the above hand. RULE: Whenever you have two five card suits in life, you always bid (or show) the higher one first. As opener, as responder to the opening bid, as an overcaller and now.

Here's how the bidding would go:

1NT - 2H

2S - 4H

The 4 H bid announces that, in addition to having five S, you also have five H and allows partner to choose the best contract.

Note that this last auction is a simplified version. You should discuss with partner what to do with 5-5 in the majors and only 8-9 HCP versus having 10 or more HCP. There are other methods.

Note that with a very weak hand and 5-5 in the majors e.g.

**S J7543
H Q10963
D 32
C 7**

Transfer to the better major (in this case: Bid 2D to transfer to hearts) and then pass when partner bids 2H)

Until now, you have had game-going hands. Now you are dealt this disappointment.

**S Axxxx
H xx
D xxx
C xx**

Partner once again opens 1 NT and you consider passing. If you pass, you are providing partner with only one trick. 1 NT is a tough contract to make when partner has trash. Your side will be much safer playing this hand in Spades. Remember that the 1 NT opener cannot have a singleton or a void when he opens 1 NT so at least your side will have seven Spades between you. The hand will be easier to control in a suit contract.

1NT - 2 H
2 S - Pass

In order to use Stayman, traditionally you need to have 8 or more HCP. However, sometimes you are dealt this

**S 5432
H 7654
D 7543
C 7**

or

**S 5432
H 7654
D 87543
C --**

On this hand, you can use Stayman also. Some people call this "Garbage Stayman."

You bid 2 C when partner has opened 1 NT and then pass whatever partner responds, even if she responds 2 D. Partner will have more fun playing this in 2 D than in 1 NT. She will even be able to ruff her losing C's with your tiny D's.

One more: You must not use Stayman when you have no short suit. No shortness, no Stayman. e.g.

S AXXX

H KXX

D QXX

C QXX

Just bid 3NT. You have no ruffing values, so a suit contract does not offer an advantage.

Note that if you are playing Puppet Stayman, you can use it with 4-3-3-3. If partner has a 5-card major, this would be best of all. AND, if she has a five-card suit, then SHE has a short suit.

Stayman and Transfers are, like all conventions, very useful, but only when you use them properly and with a full understanding of all their ramifications. Take the time to learn how to use them and apply them when appropriate. Remember, just because you have a hammer, not every problem is a nail.

FOLLOW THE LEADER? Smart Guidelines for Leading Partner's Suit



What do we lead when partner has bid a suit? We lead her suit. Unless she has opened 1C or 1D and we have something else that screams to be led, such as AKx of another suit (against a trump suit contract) or KQJxx in another suit against NT.

DON'T BE CUTE, LEAD PARTNER'S SUIT!

On the hand below, West has nothing better to lead so leads partner's suit.

If West had held the following cards in partner's suit against a **NT** contract (these are all different scenarios with the suggested lead in that suit underlined):

- K62
- Q83
- A952 - bottom of something
- 952 - top of nothing
- 93 - top of nothing and always lead high-low when you have a doubleton.

So you see, it was only back in 1939 that we would lead the top of partner's bid suit. That is NOT the case now. We lead pretty much the same as what we would lead when leading partner's suit against a suit contract, but we do not underlead an Ace on opening lead against a suit contract. Thus, with A952, we would lead the Ace if partner bid the suit and we chose to lead that suit.

There is one exception to leading "top of nothing," and that is when partner has bid the suit and we have NOT raised her.

When we have 952 in partner's suit and we **have raised** partner's suit, we lead the 9. Partner will KNOW this cannot be a doubleton as we would never have raised her with a doubleton.

BUT when we have 952 in partner's suit and we **have not raised**, now we must lead a small one. It is more important for partner to know that we have 3 or more cards in her suit than for her to know whether we have an honor or not. This way, she will not think that you might have a doubleton.

So with three or four small cards in partner's suit and you have **NOT** raised, lead small.

Hand Example 1

<p>East Deals</p> <p>♠ 9 5 4 3 ♥ 8 4 ♦ K 5 4 ♣ 10 9 3 2</p>	<p>♠ A 7 6 ♥ 9 3 2 ♦ Q J 8 ♣ Q J 6 4</p>	<p>♠ J 8 2 ♥ Q J 10 7 6 5 ♦ A 7 ♣ K 7</p>													
	<div style="background-color: #008000; color: white; padding: 5px; display: inline-block;"> <table style="border: none;"> <tr><td></td><td>N</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>W</td><td>→</td><td>E</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td>S</td><td></td></tr> </table> </div>		N		W	→	E		S						
	N														
W	→	E													
	S														
	<p>♠ K Q 10 ♥ A K ♦ 10 9 6 3 2 ♣ A 8 5</p>														
	<table style="border: none;"> <tr><td>10</td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>3</td><td>11</td><td></td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>16</td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr> </table>	10				3	11			16					
10															
3	11														
16															
West	North	East	South												
Pass	3 NT	1 ♥	1 NT												
		All pass													
Lead: ♥ 8															

Opening lead: Heart 8.

Declarer now takes the time at trick one to make a plan. She counts her sure winners:

- 3 spade winners
- 2 heart winners
- 1 club winner
- 0 diamond winner (no ace, no winner)

South knows that she needs 3 more winners to make this contract. She determines that diamonds are her project suit. She wins the first trick with the Heart King and leads a small diamond. It is now that West has to be on his toes.

We have all heard of "second hand low." BUT if West woodenly plays the Diamond 4, declarer plays the Diamond Queen from dummy and East is forced to win the Diamond Ace. That is East's hand entry GONE with the wind. Now East can set up the Hearts (by leading another Heart. The Hearts will now be good, but East has no entry).

It is mandatory that West hop up with the Diamond King and lead his final Heart. This will drive out declarer's last Heart stopper. Now South has to lead another Diamond. East will win with the Diamond Ace and now run his long Heart suit. EW scores 4 Heart winners and Diamond Ace and King. Down 2.

Now let's look at another hand

Hand Example 2

East Deals		♠ 6 4 3		
		♥ 5 2		
		♦ A J 10 9 7 4		
		♣ K 6		
♠ A 7 2		N	♠ K J 10 9	
♥ 9 7 4		W → E	♥ A Q 10 6 3	
♦ 5 2		S	♦ 8	
♣ J 10 8 4 3			♣ Q 7 2	
		♠ Q 8 5		
	8	♥ K J 8		
	5 12	♦ K Q 6 3		
	15	♣ A 9 5		
West	North	East	South	
		1 ♥	1 NT	
2 ♥	3 NT	All pass		
Lead: ♥ 9				

West dutifully leads partner's suit. Top of Nothing because he has raised partner's Hearts. East KNOWS that West cannot have an honor or he would have led a small card

(Bottom of Something). East wins the Heart Ace. East knows that if she leads back a Heart, South will win the Heart Jack and also the Heart King.

East also knows that West cannot have much in his hand at all. North and South have 24 HCP at least between them and East has 12 HCP. West is marked with approximately 4 HCP.

Pursuing Hearts is quite futile. Time to shift gears. East leads the Spade Jack (top of an interior sequence). If South covers, West wins and returns another Spade. If South does not cover, West encourages with the Spade 7. East continues. If South ducks again, West must unblock the suit and play the Spade Ace and now lead back another Spade. East's King drops South's Queen and it is a happy day for EW. Down one!

East used the **RULE OF 40** to determine how many points West could possibly hold. Add the number of points known in declarer and dummy and add your own; this leaves x number of points for partner. Defend accordingly.

Now Test Your Play!

East Deals

<p>♠ — ♥ K Q J 9 6 5 3 ♦ A 9 3 ♣ Q J 10</p>	<p>♠ J 4 2 ♥ 8 4 ♦ K Q J 7 6 4 ♣ 5 3</p>	<p>N W → E S</p>	<p>♠ A 7 6 3 ♥ A 10 2 ♦ 5 ♣ 9 8 7 6 4</p>
---	--	--------------------------	---

	7			<p>♠ K Q 10 9 8 5 ♥ 7 ♦ 10 8 2 ♣ A K 2</p>
	13	8		
	12			

West	North	East	South
4 ♥	4 ♠	Pass	1 ♠
		Dbl	All pass

Lead: ♥ K

West leads the Heart King. Over to East who has to find a way to beat this contract now that he has doubled! It seems VERY unlikely that a second round of Hearts will live which means that EW would only get two tricks: Heart Ace (or King) and Spade Ace. UNLESS East could get West to lead a Diamond at trick two. Hmm. East could play the Heart 2, discouraging a Heart continuation but then West MIGHT choose to now lead a Club. Let's face it: Partners are not very good guessers.

East cannot count on partner to figure out to lead a Diamond at trick two. East must take the bull by the horns and overtake partner's Heart King with the Ace. East then leads the Diamond 5. West wins it and if West does not continue with a Diamond...you guessed it.... you get a new partner! East scores a ruff and NS is down one doubled.

It is true that EW can make 4 Hearts so NS did fine to bid 4S BUT EW could not make 5H (on a C lead by North, N gets a C ruff) so a plus is a plus. The important thing for EW is to beat the NS contract of 4S.