

## ♠♥♦♣ BIDDING TO A MAKEBLE SLAM ♠♥♦♣

Your partner deals and it's two passes to you:

S	South
♠	K852
♥	
♦	AKQ852
♣	A42

What do you think of your hand? You have a 6-4-3-0. It is very unbalanced. You have only 4 losers. You should have "slam" in the forefront of your mind. But you will go slowly and see what the opponents and your partner have to say. You open 1♦.

West makes the expected overcall of 1♥, and your partner responds 1♠. This is good news. You have a fit in Spades of at least 9 Spades, since partner would have doubled if he had only four Spades. East now advances 3♦. This is a jump cuebid. A jump cuebid of an overcall is termed "a mixed raise." It shows 4+ card support for her partner's Hearts and about 7-9 total points. It is similar to the Bergen Raise of 3♣ over an opening of 1♠ or 1♥.

It's back to you. You must make a strong bid. Any suit bid short of game would be invitational and could be passed. You need something stronger and forcing. The cuebid is answer. Rebidding 4♥ shows a control in the Heart suit and is forcing to game and, at the 4-level, is slam invitational.

Partner rebid 4NT, asking for Key Cards, including the ♠K. You have 3 Key Cards and a void. There are various ways of showing this. Since 5♦ would normally show 3 Key Cards, 6♦ can be used to show 3 Key Cards and a void somewhere. North will easily assume it is the Heart suit, since your 4♥ cuebid pretty much advertised it.

Your partner rebids 6♠ and East leads the ♥10. Take over for North and plan the play.

**S** South

♠ K852

♥

♦ AKQ852

♣ A42

East lead: ♥ 10

**N** North

♠ AJ743

♥ Q6

♦ 4

♣ K10983

North counts 1 Spade loser, 2 Heart losers that he can easily ruff in the dummy and 3 Club losers.

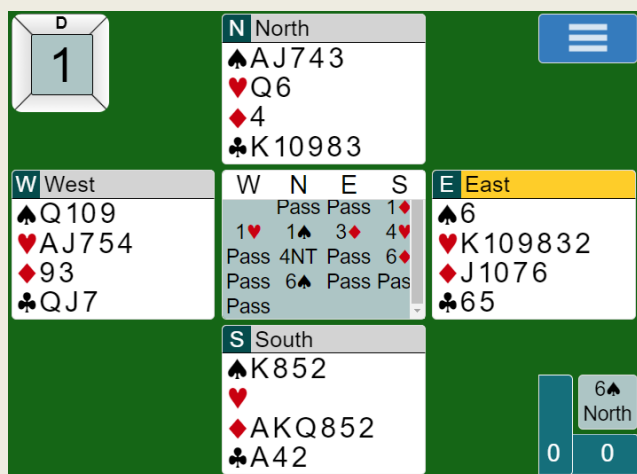
If he can draw all four outstanding trump in two rounds, he can give up a Club and ruff the remaining Clubs in the dummy. Is there a better way?

Yes, the Diamond suit can be set up for 2 or 3 Club discards, depending on the split. As long as the Diamond split is no worse than 4-2, this plan succeeds and may even produce an overtrick.

The next question is how to play the Spades. The probability of a 2-2 split is slightly better than an 3-1. But you first must cash the ♠K and check for the dreaded 4-0 split. Both defenders follow suit and you go with the probabilities and lead to the ♠A. East show out, so you have a definite ♠Q loser. You don't draw it, but let West take it whenever he wants.

You play 3 rounds of Diamonds and East discards on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Diamond. You lead the fourth Diamond, planning to ruff, but West takes his ♠Q. Now the trump are out and the last two Diamonds provide 2 more Club discards and a total of 12 tricks.

This is the entire deal:



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

<https://tinyurl.com/2k7cf3ja>, or copy and paste it into your browser. Click on the "Next" button on the bottom to advance through each trick. If you don't want to see the opponents hands, click on the white area in the South hand before you start.

Alternatively, by clicking on "Play" you can play all four hands and see if you can make the hand on your own.