

♠♥♦♣ CAREFUL PLAY EVERY DAY ♠♥♦♣

This is an easy deal but it is instructive. It illustrates the steps and some of the considerations you should go through with every deal you declare. You open 1♥ with the following hand which you dealt. The opponents are silent.

S	South
♠	K64
♥	AQJ96
♦	K6
♣	1073

You have a typical minimum strength, balanced major suit opener. Your partner responds 2♣. If you are playing Standard American, this shows at least 10 HCP's. If you are playing 2/1, the response at the 2-level is game forcing.

You show your balanced minimum with a standard 2NT rebid. This shows a 5-card heart suit and no other 4-card minor. Your partner jumps to 4♥. He knows your strength and distribution and has ruled out slam. You have no reason to contradict his judgement, so you pass.

West leads the ♣K. What's your plan?

N	North
♠	A7
♥	K105
♦	Q853
♣	A864

East leads ♣K

S	South
♠	K64
♥	AQJ96
♦	K6
♣	1073

You are in a suit contract, so you first count your losers. You have 1 spade, 1 diamond and 2 club losers. That is one too many, so you devise a plan to eliminate the only loser you can do anything about – the spade loser.

You plan to trump the third spade in the dummy. However, since there are 5 spades outstanding, you will need all of dummy's spades to pull all of the trump. There will be no problem if you play 2 rounds of spades and trump the third, as long as the suits split normally. But, there is a small chance that they will not and one of the defenders can trump your second spade. You have to think about that while you are making your plan.

The last part of your planning is to consider the order you will play the suits. There is no reason not to pull two rounds of trump before you play the spades. You only need one heart in the dummy to ruff your third spade, so you can afford to make a partial draw. This decreases the already small chance of an opponent's spade ruff even more.

The other factor to remember, is that the heart you leave in the dummy for the spade ruff must be a high heart so there is no chance that East can over-ruff.

You now should be able to make this contract by winning the club lead, pulling two rounds of trump and using dummy's ♥K to ruff your third spade. When you get back to your hand you must pull the last trump.

Look at the entire deal:

11		N North		W N E S	
D		♠ A7		P 2♣ P 2NT	
		♥ K105		P 4♥ P P	
		♦ Q853			
		♣ A864			
W West		E East			
♠ 1085		♠ QJ932			
♥ 74		♥ 832			
♦ J1074		♦ A92			
♣ KQJ9		♣ 52			
		S South			
		♠ K64		4♥ S NS: 0 EW: 0	
		♥ AQJ96			
		♦ K6			
		♣ 1073			

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

<https://tinyurl.com/y63v4j5l> 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.