

♠♥♦♣ EVERY LITTLE CARD IS IMPORTANT ♠♥♦♣

North is the dealer and opens 1♣. East passes and you respond 1♥ with this hand:

S	South
♠	J54
♥	AKQJ104
♦	852
♣	7

West overcalls 2 and partner rebids his clubs – 3♣. West passes and it's back to you.

The first thing you notice is your self sufficient heart suit. A self-sufficient suit is one that can serve as trump without any help from your partner. He can have a void in hearts and you can still pull all the trump from the opponents.

This hand qualifies for Losing Trick Count analysis, since you have a fit in hearts. Of course, it is a fit with yourself – but still a fit.

Even though you have only 11 HCP, you have only 7 losers. Your partner has 7 or few losers, since he opened. That adds up to 14 losers. Subtracting 14 from 24, you get 10 winners. Your rebid should be 4♥. This ends the auction and West leads the ♦A.

N	North
♠	A863
♥	5
♦	94
♣	AKQJ83

West's Lead: ♦A

S	South
♠	J54
♥	AKQJ104
♦	852
♣	7

West follows with the ♦K, East playing the ♦10 and ♦6, in that order. West then leads the ♦Q. What is your plan?

Your hand has 2 losing spades and 3 losing diamonds. Many declarers would simply ruff the 3rd diamond in the dummy and discard 2 losing spades on the ♣AKQ. Then get back to their hand with a spade ruff, to pull the rest of the trump, and claim.

That wouldn't work. East played a high-low signal on the first two diamonds. He will over-ruff your ♥5 and lead a spade. That puts you back on the board with the ♠A.

When you play the clubs, West ruffs the second club and you are set, losing two diamonds, a diamond over-ruff and a club ruff.

In effect, you wasted the little trump in the dummy when you knew it couldn't win the trick. Notice how much more effective it would be to discard a black card on the ♦Q and give West the first three diamond tricks. That's all they can get. West's best defense is to switch to a spade at trick 4. You win the ♠A and use your little ♥5 to get back to you hand and pull the outstanding 6 hearts. Now you can take all the rest of the tricks with a combinations of dummy's clubs and your remaining trump.

Partner didn't have much to give you in hearts, but even is little singleton ♥5 was not to be wasted!

This is the entire deal:

D	1				
N North					
♠A863					
♥5					
♦94					
♣AKQJ83					
W West					
♠92					
♥8732					
♦AKQJ73					
♣6					
E East					
♠KQ107					
♥96					
♦106					
♣109542					
S South					
♠J54					
♥AKQJ104					
♦852					
♣7					
				4♥	South
				0	0

You can see how this hand should be played by clicking on this link: <https://tinyurl.com/yguqmfci>, 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.