

♠♥♦♥ TAPPING THE DECLARER ♠♥♦♣

This time you are sitting in the West position. North and South have the auction to themselves and they reach a contract of 4♥.

		♠ A Q J 7 4	
		♥ Q 7 4	
		♦ Q 5	
		♣ 9 6 3	
♠ 8 3		♠ —	
♥ A 6 5 2	N	♥ —	
♦ 10 3	W E	♦ —	
♣ K J 10 8 2	S	♣ —	
		♠ —	
		♥ —	
		♦ —	
		♣ —	
<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
			1 ♥
Pass	1 ♠	Pass	2 ♦
Pass	3 ♥	Pass	4 ♥
All pass			

The two most significant things about your hand is your four hearts and your nice club suit. Whenever you are dealt four or five trump, your objective should be to play such that the declarer loses control of the trump suit. Here, you probably have only one less trump than declarer. He didn't rebid his hearts on his second bid, so he holds only 5 hearts and has diamonds as a second suit. You must try to get him to use two of his trump on a side suit so that you not only achieve parity, but you hold more than he does. This technique is called "tapping" the declarer. Your club suit gives you the best chance of tapping.

You hopefully lead the ♣J, the top of an interior sequence. You see your partner win the ♣A and return the ♣7, trapping declarer's ♣Q with your ♣K. You know declarer is now out of clubs, so you lead a third club which he ruffs. Now declarer has only four hearts. He leads up to his ♥Q and back to the ♥K in his hand. How do you play?

If you win the first or second trump lead with your ♥A, declarer will prevail. He will use dummy's trump to get back in the lead and draw your remaining trump. You must wait until there are no more trump in the dummy. You win the third trump and lead another club. Now declarer is toast. He must use

his last trump to win the trick. Now you are in control. You will ruff in on one of his side suits, claim your 5th club and set the contract by 2 tricks.

This is called playing a forcing game and when you do, remember to win the trump trick on which dummy will play his last trump so you continue to tap the declarer.

Look at the entire deal:

11 D	N North	W	N	E	S
	♠ AQJ74 ♥ Q74 ♦ Q5 ♣ 963	P	1♠	P	1♥
W West		P	3♥	P	4♥
♠ 83 ♥ A652 ♦ 103 ♣ KJ1082	E East	P	P	P	
	♠ 10962 ♥ 8 ♦ 98742 ♣ A74				
	S South				
	♠ K5 ♥ KJ1093 ♦ AKJ6 ♣ Q5				
		4♥ S NS: 0 EW: 0			

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

<http://tinyurl.com/y4e42lvt>, 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.

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