

♠♥♦♣ TO DRAW OR NOT ♠♥♦♣

You've dealt yourself this 26 HCP hand – more than your share:

S	South
♠	AKQ63
♥	A4
♦	AK
♣	AQ72

You open 2♣ and after partner responds 2♦, waiting, you rebid your 5-card major – 2♠.

Now partner shows support for your Spades, bidding 3♠. What is your next bid?

There is no sense asking for key cards. You have all 5 of them. Plus you have the ♠Q. Your Losing Trick Count is 2. Surely partner will have 1 card to cover those 2 losers. You just bid ♠6.

West leads the ♦Q, and you see the dummy:

N	North
♠	872
♥	10863
♦	975
♣	K64

West's Lead: ♦Q

S	South
♠	AKQ63
♥	A4
♦	AK
♣	AQ72

How do you intend to take 12 tricks?

Assuming Spades break normally, you have 5 Spades, 1 Heart, 2 Diamonds and 3 Clubs. You are 1 trick short.

All is well as long as Clubs break 3-3. That will give you an extra Club trick. But the probability of that break is only 35%. A 4-2 break is almost 50%. That is what you must plan for on this deal. That means you have to ruff the 4th spade in the dummy.

But that brings up the questions of drawing trump. You will have to play 3 rounds of trump, at a minimum. So if you draw trump first, the dummy will be exhausted of Spades and you won't get that 10th trick. But if you don't pull trump, the defender with the short Clubs will ruff your third Club.

The answer is "partial draw." You play the ♠AK and hope the player with the 3rd Spade is also the one with the 4th Club. If the Clubs and Spades are reversed, you will go down. But, if so, there is no way this hand can be made. When only 1 line of play will work, you must take it.

This is the entire deal:

<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: 40px; text-align: center; margin: 0 auto;"> 11 D </div>	N North ♠ 872 ♥ 10863 ♦ 975 ♣ K64	W N E S P 2♦ P 2♣ P 3♠ P 2♠ P P P 6♠			
	W West ♠ 94 ♥ KJ75 ♦ QJ1063 ♣ 85	E East ♠ J105 ♥ Q92 ♦ 842 ♣ J1093			
	S South ♠ AKQ63 ♥ A4 ♦ AK ♣ AQ72		6♠ S NS: 0 EW: 0		
	(Empty space for play)				

You can see how this hand should be played by clicking on this link: <https://tinyurl.com/y3jpfpcr>, 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.