

NOT SO FAST

You are sitting in South and are dealt this lovely hand by West:

South
 ♠3
 ♥A85
 ♦AKQJ987
 ♣A2

You are deciding whether to open the hand 1♦ or 2♣ when suddenly you hear West blurt out 4♠. Now what do you do? This bid is preemptive and shows a long spade suit and perhaps one outside winner. You are thinking about a double but in your agreement, a double of 4♠ is for penalty. You're already beyond 3NT so your only option is 5♦ or pass. You can't let them preempt you out of a game, you think. You bid 5♦ and everyone passes.

West	North	East	South
4 ♠	Pass	Pass	5 ♦
All Pass			

West leads the ♠K, and you see this surprising dummy:

	North
	♠A762
	♥K43
	♦1065
	♣987
West	
♠K	
	South
	♠3
	♥A85
	♦AKQJ987
	♣A2

This is wonderful. You count one heart loser and one club loser. You plan to capture the lead with the ♠A, draw trump and concede the two losers.

But just before you call for the ♠A the thought occurs to you: Not so fast! Between your partner and you, you have 5 spades. If West started with 8 spades, East is void and will trump your ♠A. That brings you up to 3 losers. What's the solution?

You must play low from the dummy on this first trick and let them win it. West will continue with another spade and you can trump that, again, playing low from dummy. Then you can pull trump and get to the dummy to discard one of the two losers on the ♠A. Instead of losing a heart and a club, you lose a spade and a club. Either way, you made your game contract.

This is the complete board:

8	N North	W	N	E	S
	♠ A762 ♥ K43 ♦ 1065 ♣ 987	4♠ P	P P	P P	5♦
W West	E East				
♠ KQJ109854 ♥ 1082 ♦ ♣ Q6	♠ ♥ QJ97 ♦ 432 ♣ KJ10543				
	S South				
	♠ 3 ♥ A65 ♦ AKQJ987 ♣ A2				
		5♦ S NS: 0 EW: 0			

If you would like to see the whole hand played out, click on this link: <http://tinyurl.com/o26m6vn> . Or copy and paste it into your browser. Click on the “Next” button on the bottom to advance through each trick.