

Removing the Impediments

Dealer: West
 Vul: Non
 Lead: ♠A

	North	
	♠K76	
	♥1082	
	♦K92	
	♣QJ108	
West		East
♠AQJ983		♠1052
♥AQJ75		♥94
♦64		♦8
♣----		♣K765432
	South	
	♠4	
	♥K63	
	♦AQJ10753	
	♣A9	

The Bidding:

West	North	East	South
1 ♠	Pass	Pass	Dbl ⁽¹⁾
2 ♥	3 ♣ ⁽²⁾	Pass	3 ♦ ⁽³⁾
Pass	5 ♦ ⁽⁴⁾	All Pass	

Making 5♦ for +400

1. South is too strong for a simple overcall. With a hand of 17 or more points, the correct bid is to double and then bid your suit, no matter what partner responds. Originally, he is thinking you are simply overcalling, but when he hears you changing suit from his club advance, he knows you have the big hand.
2. Partner has a free bid. With a minimum hand of 0 to 8 points he would pass. With his 9 points, however, he can safely come in at the 3 level with his best suit, clubs.

3. South shows his big suit and his big hand by ignoring partner's club bid and bidding his beautiful diamonds.
4. North pushes to game. He has a golden $\heartsuit K$, a well placed $\spadesuit K$, and good spot cards in the other suits.

West leads the $\spadesuit A$ and follows that with a passive trump lead. South takes a long time to plan out this play. He has 3 potential heart losers and a club loser, in addition to the spade he already lost. He can plan to finesse the $\clubsuit K$ and if the $\clubsuit K$ is, in fact, in the East, he discards a couple of hearts on his clubs in what is called a roughing finesse.

Here's how it works: he keeps playing the good clubs on the board until East plays the $\clubsuit K$, then he ruffs and returns to the dummy to finish the clubs; all the while discarding hearts whenever East **doesn't** play the $\clubsuit K$.

There are a couple of problems. First, he has to pull another round of trump so West doesn't ruff any of the good clubs. Second, he has to be able to get to the dummy three times: once to lead the $\clubsuit Q$ for the initial finesse, a second time to lead the $\clubsuit J$ after he wins the $\spadesuit A$ in his hand, and a third time after East plays the $\clubsuit K$ and he ruffs. Unfortunately, there aren't enough entries for this plan to work.

What's the solution? Get rid of the $\clubsuit A$. It isn't necessary because it only tops a winning club from the north hand. By discarding the $\clubsuit A$ on the $\spadesuit K$, South eliminates the need for one of the entries. Now the plan can work.

South wins West's trump lead in his hand and pulls the last trump with dummy's $\heartsuit 9$. He lets the $\clubsuit Q$ ride and after it wins, he plays the good $\spadesuit K$ while discarding that pesky $\clubsuit A$. Now he keeps leading clubs until East plays his $\clubsuit K$. He ruffs and then goes back to the dummy with the $\heartsuit K$ and finishes the clubs, all the while discarding 2 hearts. He finishes with 11 tricks, losing only the $\spadesuit A$ and the $\heartsuit A$. Well done!