

Tricks with trumps - recap

	North	South
E ♠ 8		
A ♥ 6 5 2	1♥	3♥
S ♦ J 9 7 6 5 2	4♥	
T ♣ T 8 3		

What should you lead?

The lead of the singleton spade leaps instantly to mind, and no other plan suggests itself at all. What's more, partner will have some points in this hand, probably at least 10. That means there's a chance he can win a trick in time to give you a ruff. Go for it. This is the time to lead a singleton. You hit the jackpot. Partner has the spade ace. He's ready to give you your ruff. Partner leads the ♠3. This, too, is a suit preference signal. It tells you to lead the lower of the other two side suits. It tells you to lead back a club. Thanks to your desperation, partner's aces, and a suit preference signal, declarer is down before he even gets started.

The full hand:

♠ 9 6 2		
♥ A K J 7 4		
♦ T 8		
♣ K Q J		
Declarer	♠ 8	
♥ T	♥ 6 5 2	
♦ Q 4 3	♦ J 9 7 6 5 2	
♣ A 9 7 2		♣ T 8 3
Dummy	♠ K Q J 4	
♥ Q 9 8 3		
♦ A K		
♣ 6 5 4		

	North	South
E ♠ A 6 2		
A ♥ A 9 7 4 3	1NT	2♠
S ♦ Q J T 4	2♠	4♠
T ♣ 6		

What should you lead?

It's true that clubs in an unbid suit. But what do you expect partner to hold? Partner will have no more than 4 points. It isn't likely that he can get in to give you a ruff. Your best chance is to attack in diamonds. The diamond lead finds its mark. You will return diamonds when you win the ace of spades, and then cash a diamond when you win the ace of hearts. As luck has it, partner will eventually win the club queen, down one. If you had lead the singleton club, North would make his contract. North, who knows the rule of eleven, will let the lead come into his hand. When West shows the 10, North knows that the 6 was not fourth best. Was it from the Q 8 6? If so, a club finesse will allow North to avoid a club loser. So North sets about drawing trumps. When you takes your ace right away, declarer throws dummy's king underneath it, so he can win the last round of trumps in his hand to try the club finesse. West gets out with the queen of diamonds, which declarer rides to his hand. He leads to the queen of spades, and then he plays another round of trump back to his hand. Now when North leads a small club toward dummy's A J, all becomes clear. North puts up dummy's ace and plays a small club toward his 9. West gets his queen, but dummy's jack is now good, and declarer will throw his losing diamond away on it.

The full hand:

		♠ J T 8 5	
		♥ K Q 6	
		♦ A 7 6	
		♣ K 9 4	
		Declarer	
♠ 9 3		♠ A 6 2	
♥ J 8 5		♥ A 9 7 4 3	
♦ 9 5 2		♦ Q J T 4	
♣ Q T 8 5 3		♣ 6	
		Dummy	
		♠ K Q 7 4	
		♥ T 2	
		♦ K 8 3	
		♣ A J 7 2	

	West	North	East	South
♠ 8 7 4				
♥ 8 6 3	2♥	pass	pass	2♠
♦ A Q J	pass	4♠		all pass
♣ A Q J 8				
Dummy			E ♠ A 5	
			A ♥ A 4	
			S ♦ 9 8 5 3 2	
			T ♣ 7 6 5 3	

Partner leads the ♥K. How should you defend?

Your partner opens the bidding 2 hearts, but the opponents proceed to spades. Partner leads the king of hearts. How should you defend? You can count three winners. You will win two heart tricks and the ace of trump. Forget clubs and diamonds. If declarer doesn't have one of the kings, he will finesse your partner out of it. The only other possible trick for the defence is a trump trick by partner. It's unlikely he has the king, and it's a longshot, perhaps, that he will have the queen, but what if he had three trumps to the jack? Is there any way it could be promoted? Remember, whenever the defence seems to be out of tricks, think about a possible trump promotion. Well there is a way to promote the jack. Can you see it?

The answer is simple and shocking! Overtake partner's king, and then return the suit. When he continues it again, ruff his good jack with your ace of trumps! Partner's jack of spades will be promoted! Think about this one the next one you form the opinion that you should never trump with the ace!

The full hand:

		♠ 8 7 4	
		♥ 8 6 3	
		♦ A Q J	
		♣ A Q J 8	
		Dummy	
♠ J 3 2		♠ A 5	
♥ K Q J 7 5 2		♥ A 4	
♦ 7 4		♦ 9 8 5 3 2	
♣ 9 2		♣ 7 6 5 3	
		Declarer	
		♠ K Q T 9 6	
		♥ T 9	
		♦ K T 6	
		♣ K T 4	