

## What's It All About, Alfie?

Matchpoints  
North Deals  
None Vul

♠ 9 6	♠ Q J 5 2	♠ 8 3
♥ A K 10 7 5 2	♥ J 9	♥ 6 4 3
♦ 7 5 2	♦ A Q 10	♦ J 9 8 6
♣ K 5	♣ J 9 6 2	♣ Q 10 8 3
	♠ A K 10 7 4	
	♥ Q 8	
	♦ K 4 3	
	♣ A 7 4	

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
	Pass	Pass	1 ♠
2 ♥	3 ♥	Pass	4 ♠
All pass			
4 ♠ by South			

Some of you may remember this hand from my June 12th lecture entitled "What's It All About, Alfie?"

South opened the bidding 1 ♠, West overcalled 2 ♥, North made a limit raise in spades by bidding 3 ♥, and after a pass by East, South closed out the bidding by bidding 4 ♠. West started with the A and K of ♥, shifted to a low diamond, North rose with the A, and immediately played a ♣ to her Ace.

Did you see what West needed to do? That's right. West needed to unblock the K of clubs under the Ace. Not an easy play, but being "at the table", you foresaw the need to do make this great play! If he didn't make this great play, South would draw trumps, clear diamonds and exit with a club, and West would be down to all hearts yielding a game going extra trick via a ruff and a sluff.

Today, we are going to build upon this theme and ask the broader question, "Should You Sacrifice Your Honor?"

## Should You Sacrifice Your Honor?

South Deals  
N-S Vul

♠ 4 3 2		♠ Q J 8 5
♥ K 9		♥ 8 3
♦ A J 9 7 5		♦ K 8 6
♣ 4 3 2		♣ J 10 6 5
♠ 10 6	<div style="display: inline-block; background-color: #008000; color: white; padding: 10px; border: 1px solid black;">                 N W     E    S             </div>	
♥ Q J 10 7 2		
♦ Q 10 4		
♣ 9 8 7		
♠ A K 9 7		
♥ A 6 5 4		
♦ 3 2		
♣ A K Q		

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
Pass	3 N	All pass	2 N

3 N by South

Here's a relatively common situation. South is declarer in 3N. He has 8 top tricks - 2 spades, 2 hearts, 1 diamond and 3 clubs. After the lead of the Q of hearts, he wins the heart in hand and plays a diamond towards dummy. If West plays low, declarer will most certainly insert the 9. Later, he will finesse the J and score 4 diamonds, 2 spades 2 hearts and 3 clubs - 11 tricks.

But if West alertly sacrifices her heart honor on the first round of the suit, declarer will win the Ace, cross back to hand with a club and play a second diamond. He might guess right and still make 11 tricks - but if he goes up with the K (wouldn't you?) - he'll go down 1!

## Should You Sacrifice Your Honor?

IMPs  
North Deals  
None Vul

♠ K 10 8 7 2											
♥ Q 8 4											
♦ Q 8											
♣ Q 3 2											
♠ Q 9 5	<div style="display: inline-block; background-color: #008000; color: white; padding: 5px; border: 1px solid black;"> <table style="border-collapse: collapse; margin: 0 auto;"> <tr><td></td><td style="text-align: center;">N</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">W</td><td style="width: 10px;"></td><td style="text-align: center;">E</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td style="text-align: center;">S</td><td></td></tr> </table> </div>		N		W		E		S		♠ J 3
	N										
W		E									
	S										
♥ 3 2		♥ K 7									
♦ A K 10 3		♦ 9 7 6 5									
♣ A J 10 8		♣ K 7 6 5 4									
		♠ A 6 4									
		♥ A J 10 9 6 5									
		♦ J 4 2									
		♣ 9									

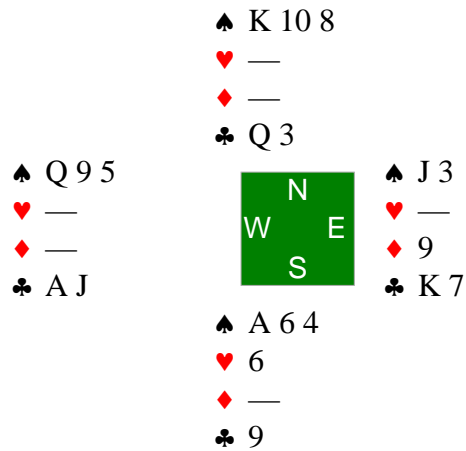
<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
	Pass	Pass	1 ♥
Dbl	1 ♠	2 ♣	Dbl
3 ♣	4 ♥	All pass	

4 ♥ by South

Crazy bidding got NS to an impossible 4H contract, but sloppy defense and careful declarer play resulted in a huge IMP gain for NS. After a pass by E, South decided his hand was too strong to open 2 ♥ and instead opened the bidding 1 ♥. West doubled, North bid 1 ♠, and E bid 2 ♣. South doubled to show 3 spades. West bid 3 ♣ and North made a rather amazing bid of 4 ♥!

As you can see, if West cashed the A of ♣ after taking the A-K of ♦, EW could just wait around for their spade trick to set the hand one trick. But look what happened after West played a third round of diamonds instead of cashing the club winner. Declarer ruffed in dummy. Took a successful heart finesse. Repeated the finesse and ran his trumps. This was the 5 card ending as South played his last heart....

## Should You Sacrifice Your Honor?



<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
	Pass	Pass	1 ♥
Dbl	1 ♠	2 ♣	Dbl
3 ♣	4 ♥	All pass	

4 ♥ by South

On the lead of the last trump, West had to face the common dilemma we bridge players encounter from time to time. Should he now sacrifice his honor?

As you can see, the answer here is a resounding YES!. If West now jettisons the A of clubs, there is no way declarer can avoid losing two tricks. If he plays his club, East can overtake West's J with his K, and cash the 9 of diamonds. If, he instead plays on spades, West will eventually score his Queen - and EW will win the K of clubs.

As it was, West held onto his club Ace, and now West had to face another honor sacrifice dilemma. If he plays his 9 of spades, the defense don't have a chance. If he returns the 5 of spades, there is a chance that South could go wrong by inserting the 10. West made, what I would consider to be his best play in this situation which was to now sacrifice his honor! He won the Ace of ♣, and now played the Q of ♠. But declarer was on top of this situation and reading the ending perfectly, won his Ace and played a spade to the K - dropping West's doubleton J. This was a great ending to a great hand. Note that if South was fooled and finessed the 10 of ♠ on the way back, he would have lost to a doubleton J and gone down 2 - losing the last 2 tricks!

## Should You Sacrifice Your Honor?

IMPs  
 South Deals  
 E-W Vul

	♠ 9 7		
	♥ Q 8 2		
	♦ K 10 7 4		
	♣ 8 7 6 3		
♠ A 10 4	<div style="display: inline-block; background-color: green; color: white; padding: 5px; text-align: center;">             N              W     E              S           </div>	♠ K Q 8 6 5 3	
♥ A K 10 5		♥ J 4 3	
♦ 9 8 5		♦ A 3 2	
♣ 10 5 2		♣ J	
	♠ J 2		
	♥ 9 7 6		
	♦ Q J 6		
	♣ A K Q 9 4		

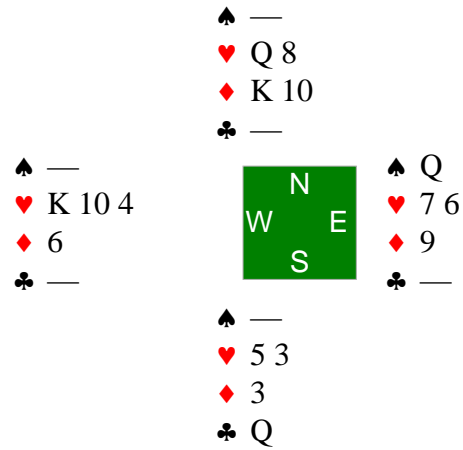
<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
			1 ♣
Dbl	Pass	4 ♠	All pass

4 ♠ by East

You have to be very careful when to sacrifice your honor - and when to preserve it! This deal highlights a situation in which the defenders switched in time and *should have* held declarer to 9 - but they didn't know how to handle their honors - and the declarer was very, very astute!

South started with the Ace of ♣ against East's 4 ♠ contract. Noting North's 7 and East's J, it was obvious to South that a diamond shift was needed at trick 2, and she smartly played the Q of ♦ at trick 2. North signaled with the 7, as East ducked. Now South had to decide whether to sacrifice her honor or preserve it. Alas, not realizing the folly of her ways, South placed the J of ♦ on the table. It went low, low Ace. East was looking at 6 spade winners, 2 heart winners and the Ace of diamonds - shy a trick of his goal. East played the hand nicely. He immediately played the J of ♥ out of hand. When South played low, he rose with the A and ruffed a club. Now K of ♠, and ♠ to dummy's Ace, and another ♣ ruffed in hand. And he played a couple more trumps to reach the following end position....

## Should You Sacrifice Your Honor?



<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
Dbl	Pass	4 ♠	1 ♣ All pass

4 ♠ by East

On the last spade, South pitched the Q of clubs, as West pitched the 6 of diamonds. North did the best he could by pitching the K of diamonds.

Now East did some counting. It appeared that South had started with AKQxx of clubs, Jx of spades and QJx of diamonds. If South had started with the Q of ♥ as well, she would have started with 15 high card points and would have opened 1 NT not 1 ♣.

So, now East held his breath and let the 9 of diamonds - hoping North had the 10. Sure enough, North had to win and lead away from his Q of ♥ - giving declarer his 10th trick.

South's huge problem on this hand was sacrificing her diamond honor. After the Q lives, she has to continue the low diamond - not the J. Now her partner is off the hook and declarer will go down.

**SO TODAY'S SHARK'S POINTER IS ... SOMETIMES YOU HAVE TO SACRIFICE YOUR HONOR TO ACHIEVE GREAT SUCCESS AT BRIDGE. BUT BE CAREFUL...ALL TOO OFTEN THE SACRIFICE MAY PROVE TO BE YOUR UNDOING!!**