

| | | | |
|------|-------|------|-------|
| West | North | East | South |
| | 1♣ | Pass | Pass |
| Dble | 2♣ | 2♥ | Pass |
| 4♥ | Pass | Pass | Pass |

Hand 1
Love All, dealer North

♠ 8
♥ A 10 8
♦ J 7 4
♣ K Q J 10 6 3

♠ A K Q J 9
♥ K Q 6
♦ K Q 8
♣ 8 5

| | | |
|---|--|---|
| N | | E |
| W | | S |

♠ 10 4 2
♥ J 7 5 3 2
♦ A 10
♣ 9 7 4

♠ 7 6 5 3
♥ 9 4
♦ 9 6 5 3 2
♣ A 2

This interesting deal features two possible game contracts for East-West – 4♣ and 4♥. 4♣ fails on the ♣K lead, always provided South overtakes and returns a Club. On a third round of Clubs South pitches a Heart and West is stuck. If he draws trumps he is at the mercy of further Club leads; if he plays on Hearts South gets a Heart ruff. What about 4♥? Well that fails after an unlikely Spade lead from South (North gets a Spade ruff) but what if South leads Clubs? Well, three rounds of Clubs do for this contract as well – on the third round South ruffs with the ♥9 and North has two trump tricks.

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|------|-------|------|-------|
| West | North | East | South |
| | | 1♥ | Dble |
| 2♥ | 2♣ | Pass | 4♣ |
| Pass | Pass | Pass | |

Hand 2
North-South Game, Dealer East

♠ K Q 8 6
♥ 10 3
♦ 4 2
♣ Q J 8 6 2

♠ 4
♥ 7 5 4 2
♦ Q 10 9 7 3
♣ 10 7 3

| | | |
|---|--|---|
| N | | E |
| W | | S |

♠ A 5 3 2
♥ A K 9 8 6
♦ J 6 5
♣ 5

♠ J 10 9 7
♥ Q J
♦ A K 8
♣ A K 9 4

How might East defend 4♣ on this one? He starts with the ♥K and cashes the two top Hearts, learning that West has four of them. Now what? It *might* work to lead Diamonds or Clubs now, hoping declarer runs out of steam, but the guaranteed defence (guaranteed if North has only four trumps) is to play another Heart. Sure, it's a ruff-and-discard but how can North handle it? He ruffs in one hand and plays trumps but East holds off until the third round and plays another Heart. That's the killer as it removes the last trump, promoting East's last Spade.

| | | | |
|------|-------|------|-------|
| West | North | East | South |
| Pass | 2♦ | Pass | 1♥ |
| Pass | 3♥ | Pass | 2♥ |
| Pass | Pass | Pass | 4♥ |

Hand 3
East-West Game, dealer South

♠ K Q
♥ 9 3 2
♦ A Q 9 6 2
♣ 7 4 3

♠ A J 9 8 5
♥ 7 6
♦ 8 7 5
♣ J 5 2

| | | |
|---|--|---|
| N | | E |
| W | | S |

♠ 10 7 3
♥ A 8 4
♦ K J 10 3
♣ Q 8 6

♠ 6 4 2
♥ K Q J 10 5
♦ 4
♣ A K 10 9

West has to lead to 4♥ here and has an awkward choice. A Spade is a no-no, a Diamond through dummy's suit is unthinkable and a Club away from the Jack highly unattractive. So West settles on a trump. Has he done the right thing? Well, West may be anxious about dummy's Diamonds – East can see that the side-suit is no danger at all. However, two rounds of trumps do not threaten the contract – declarer plays a Spade and West is unable to play another trump. Declarer gets a Spade ruff on table and the hand makes via one Spade, five Hearts (that's four in hand and a ruff on table), one Diamond and three Clubs. Where did the defence go wrong? As so often, at trick one, where East should duck the Heart; it is so often right to delay taking the Ace of trumps. Now the defence can prevent the Spade ruff and defeat the game.

| | | | |
|------|-------|------|-------|
| West | North | East | South |
| 1♠ | 2♥ | 4♣ | Pass |
| Pass | Pass | Pass | |

Hand 4
Game All, Dealer West

♠ A
♥ K Q J 9 5 2
♦ 9 6 3
♣ K 9 3

♠ K Q 9 8 5
♥ 10 6
♦ K Q
♣ Q 7 5 2

| | | |
|---|--|---|
| N | | E |
| W | | S |

♠ J 10 6 4 3
♥ 7 4 3
♦ A J 10
♣ A 10

♠ 7 2
♥ A 8
♦ 8 7 5 4 2
♣ J 8 6 4

Another simple deal (?) West plays in 4♣ and North leads the obvious ♥K. With Clubs frozen the hand revolves around **not** leading the suit. South should overtake the Heart lead with the ♥A at trick one and play one back to North's Jack. Now comes the critical point of the defence. North must disembarass himself of the Ace of Spades. If he fails to do that he will find himself employed. If he plays a third Heart at trick three (or a Diamond, say), West could (indeed, should) ruff that, cash three Diamonds and exit with a trump. What now, North? A Heart is fatal as dummy's Club gets discarded on the ruff-and-discard, and a Club lead runs to the Queen. Being left with a singleton Ace of trumps is frequently fatal for the defenders. Unshipping the ♠A can hardly cost on this hand – a Heart exit is then perfectly safe.

| | | | |
|------|-------|------|-------|
| West | North | East | South |
| | 1♠ | Pass | 3♠ |
| Pass | 4♠ | Pass | Pass |
| Pass | Pass | Pass | |

Hand 5
North-South Game, Dealer North

♠ A Q J 5 3
♥ 10 6
♦ K 9
♣ A Q 9 3

♠ 10
♥ A Q 5 4
♦ 10 7 6 3
♣ K 10 6 4

| | | |
|---|--|---|
| N | | E |
| W | | S |

♠ K 9 2
♥ 9 8
♦ J 8 5 2
♣ J 7 5 2

♠ 8 7 6 4
♥ K J 7 3 2
♦ A Q 4
♣ 8

This deal and the next three focus on *trump promotions* in one form or another. Here, North-South reach 4♠ and East has an ugly hand to lead from. With J x x x in both minors a real turn-off, he elects to try the ♥9. That scores a goal – West takes the first two Hearts and plays a third. North ruffs the third round with the Queen and East... mustn't over-ruff. With West holding the Ten of Spades East-West have two defensive trump tricks. It is rarely right to over-ruff in these positions. By failing to do so you often find that your intermediate trumps come into the game.

| | | | |
|------|-------|------|-------|
| West | North | East | South |
| | | 1♠ | Pass |
| 2♣ | 2♥ | 3♠ | Pass |
| 4♣ | Pass | Pass | Pass |

Hand 6
East-West Game, Dealer East

♠ 6 2
♥ A K J 10 7 5 3
♦ A 7
♣ 9 6

♠ 8 3
♥ Q 8
♦ K J 8 3
♣ K Q 10 7 2

| | | |
|---|--|---|
| N | | E |
| W | | S |

♠ A K J 10 9 7 4
♥ 6 2
♦ Q
♣ A J 5

♠ Q 5
♥ 9 4
♦ 10 9 6 5 4 2
♣ 8 4 3

East plays in the normal 4♣ and South leads a Heart to his partner's bid. It is easy enough for North to cash the two top Hearts but what next? A third Heart promotes a trump trick for South's ♠Q x but East would throw his Diamond loser if North led a Heart at trick three. Correct defence is for North to cash the ♦A before playing a third Heart. This works whenever partner has a trump holding as good as ♠J x x or ♠Q x. It is often right to "tighten" the hand by cashing outside winners before playing for a trump promotion.

| | | | |
|------|-------|------|-------|
| West | North | East | South |
| | | | Pass |
| 1NT | Pass | 2♣ | Pass |
| 2♥ | Pass | 4♥ | Pass |
| Pass | Pass | Pass | |

Hand 7
Game All, Dealer South

♠ 10 9 8
♥ 9 3
♦ 7 6 5 2
♣ J 8 5 2

♠ 7 5 2
♥ A K 5 4
♦ K J 9 4
♣ Q 4

| | | |
|---|--|---|
| N | | E |
| W | | S |

♠ K 6 3
♥ J 10 7 2
♦ A
♣ A K 10 6 3

♠ A Q J 4
♥ Q 8 6
♦ Q 10 8 3
♣ 9 7

North, with a truly dismal hand, leads the ♠10 against 4♥ and the defenders cash the first three rounds of the suit, ending in the South hand. Now, it should be clear to South that his side has no more tricks outside the Heart suit so it cannot hurt to play a fourth Spade. Sure, it's a ruff-and-discard – so what? North ruffs with the providential ♥9 (you see – that North hand is not so dismal after all!) and now the contract cannot make. A ruff-and-discard in search of a trump promotion can be a potent weapon for the defence when there are no evident losers for the opponents. This version of it is known as the **uppercut**.

| | | | |
|------|-------|------|-------|
| West | North | East | South |
| 1♠ | Pass | Pass | 2♥ |
| Pass | 4♥ | Pass | Pass |
| Pass | | | |

Hand 8
Love All, Dealer West

♠ 8 7 5
♥ K 5 4
♦ A 3
♣ A Q 5 4 2

♠ A K J 9 4 2
♥ A 10 7
♦ J 9
♣ 8 6

| | | |
|---|--|---|
| N | | E |
| W | | S |

♠ 6 3
♥ 9 3
♦ 10 8 6 5 4
♣ J 10 9 7

♠ Q 10
♥ Q J 8 6 2
♦ K Q 7 2
♣ K 3

West leads the ♠K against 4♥ and dummy is disappointingly good. (In passing, the North hand is nowhere near a 2♣ overcall. That would be grotesque on a 5-3-3-2 hand containing a poor suit and three low Spades. Ugh!) Anyway, against 4♥ West cashes two Spades and plays a third – if South is allowed to ruff this with a low Heart then 4♥ would make. However, if East ruffs the third Spade with the Nine then West has two trump tricks. Best defence is for West to continue with the ♠9 at trick three, encouraging East to ruff. East should also make the safety play of ruffing the third Spade high – what could that cost? Even if West played the ♠J at trick three a good defender should ruff high with the East cards. After all, West could have ♥Q J 10, for instance, as well as his actual holding.