

West	North	East	South
	1♣	2♣ ¹	2♦
2♣	3♣	Pass	5♣
Pass	Pass	Pass	

Hand 9
East-West Game, Dealer North

♠ 10 7 5
♥ A Q 3
♦ 8
♣ A Q 10 9 8 6

♠ A K 3
♥ 9 8 7
♦ Q 10 5 3
♣ 5 4 2

N		E
W		
	S	

♠ Q J 9 8 6
♥ K J 10 5 4
♦ J 4
♣ 3

♠ 4 2
♥ 6 2
♦ A K 9 7 6 2
♣ K J 7

¹ Michaels. 5-5 in the majors.
North-South reach 5♣ after East shows a moderate major two-suiter. West's lead-directing 2♣ bid duly brings the best lead and East produces the ♠Q at trick one. West overtakes that and cashes the first two Spade tricks. Now what? A Heart switch at trick three seems obvious – and it's wrong! How might declarer make the hand? By *ruffing out the Diamonds*. A Heart switch would be taken by the Ace and now declarer would (make that should) play off the ♦A, ruff a Diamond, a Club to dummy, ruff a Diamond, draw trumps ending on the table and run the winning Diamonds. All the Heart losers would go on the established side-suit. How could West have prevented this? By leading a third Spade at trick three, forcing dummy to ruff. Now declarer is unable to set up Diamonds and reach them and 5♣ quietly expires. If East held six Spades would he not have raised 2♣ to 3♣ on the *total tricks* principle?

West	North	East	South
		Pass	2♠ ¹
Pass	6♣	Pass	Pass
Pass			

Hand 10
Game All, Dealer East

♠ A K 9 5 3
♥ A 10 7 6
♦ None
♣ A 6 4 2

♠ None
♥ K J 5 2
♦ J 10 9 6 5 2
♣ K 9 3

N		E
W		
	S	

♠ 6 2
♥ Q 9 4 3
♦ A 8 7 3
♣ Q 10 8

♠ Q J 10 8 7 4
♥ 8
♦ K Q 4
♣ J 7 5

¹ Weak two. 5-9 points.
North blasts a slam by raising his partner's opening 2♣ bid to 6♣ and West leads the ♦J. South can see two Club losers, so he starts off by **not** ruffing at trick one – he pitches a Club from table instead. This (another trick one crisis) is where East has to get the defence right. If he takes the ♦A the hand is over and the slam would make – all dummy's Clubs would disappear on declarer's Diamonds. The winning defence is **read the lead** and then to **Keep Calm and Carry On** – East must duck the Diamond round to the Queen. Now declarer has only one Club discard, not three. On many layouts declarer would be able to wangle an endplay by eliminating Diamonds and Hearts and playing off the ♣A and another Club. If either defender started with ♣K x or similar they might be endplayed, forced to furnish a ruff-and-discard. That shouldn't happen here – with Clubs 3-3 6♣ should expire though natural causes.

West	North	East	South
1♥	Pass	2♣	Pass
3♣	Pass	3♥	Pass
4♥	Pass	Pass	Pass

Hand 11
Love All, Dealer South

♠ K J 7 6 3
♥ Q 2
♦ 10 4 3
♣ J 7 4

♠ 10 5
♥ A K 10 7 5
♦ A 8
♣ K 10 8 2

N		E
W		
	S	

♠ Q 8
♥ 9 8 6
♦ K Q 9 5
♣ A 9 6 3

♠ A 9 4 2
♥ J 4 3
♦ J 7 6 2
♣ Q 5

North has to find a good lead against 4♥ – that's the first problem. Having surmounted that hurdle he has to defend accurately – that's the second. With a horrible selection North chooses a Spade lead (what else, frankly?) against 4♥, the only lead to give his side a chance. South wins the Ace and returns the Two, so North knows that Spades are 5-2-4-2 around the table. What should he lead at trick three? A trump is unthinkable, a Club opens a frozen suit (no surprise there!) so it must be a Diamond exit. But **which Diamond**? With declarer marked with a doubleton it is dangerous to lead a low one. West would play small and pick up four Diamond tricks without effort no matter what South did. The correct (and winning) defence is to exit with the Ten of Diamonds, a card which cannot cost. Now declarer is surely going to fail.

West	North	East	South
1♦ ¹	1♥	1♠	Pass
1NT ²	Pass	4♣	Pass
Pass	Pass		

Hand 12
North-South Game, Dealer West

♠ None
♥ A 10 9 7 6 3
♦ K 10 9 5
♣ Q 9 2

♠ A J
♥ K 5 4
♦ A J 7 4 2
♣ 10 7 5

N		E
W		
	S	

♠ K Q 10 8 6 3 2
♥ Q J 8
♦ 8
♣ K 6

♠ 9 7 5 4
♥ 2
♦ Q 6 3
♣ A J 8 4 3

¹ Playing a strong No-trump.
² 12-14, balanced.
South leads the ♥2 against 4♣ and North ought to be able to **read the lead**, even if East false-cards with the Queen. (If South held three Hearts to an honour would he not have raised to 2♥?) So North takes the ♥A and returns the Ten, asking for a Diamond. South ruffs and duly leads a Diamond... and 4♣ makes! How? Because declarer ruffs the Diamonds out. (♦A, *Diamond ruff*, *Spade to dummy*, *Diamond ruff*, *Spade to dummy*, *Diamond ruffed high*. *Draw the last trump*, *cross to the ♥K*, *cash the thirteenth Diamond*). South should be able to see that there is no hurry to play a Diamond – any tricks in that suit are scarce going to run away. With Clubs well held the priority is to remove entries to the dummy – to that end he should lead a **trump** at trick three. Now 4♣ cannot make.

West	North	East	South
	Pass	Pass	1♣
Pass	1♥	Pass	4♦ ¹
Pass	4♥	Pass	Pass
Pass			

Hand 13
Game All, Dealer North

♠ 7 6 4
♥ Q J 8 3 2
♦ K Q 8
♣ 4 2

♠ A
♥ A 9 4
♦ 10 9 7 5 4 2
♣ 9 7 5

N		E
W		
	S	

♠ 10 9 8 5 2
♥ 5
♦ A J 6 3
♣ A 10 6

♠ K Q J 3
♥ K 10 7 6
♦ None
♣ K Q J 8 3

¹ Splinter bid, agreeing Hearts.
South makes a slight overbid of 4♦ on this hand and North-South reach 4♥. East leads the ♠10 and West can see his way to an obvious defence, assuming East has the ♣A. The defence can take the ♠A, a Club to the Ace, a Spade ruff and the Ace of trumps. However, this may be obvious to West, but it isn't obvious to East. If West takes the first Spade and plays a Club East is likely to try to give his partner a Club ruff. *How could he tell?* If West takes the ♠A and plays a neutral card – a Diamond in this case, the inferences may be clearer. Now when West takes the Ace of trumps and plays a Club East has nothing else to do but take the Ace and play a Spade. That's the theory, anyway.

West	North	East	South
	Pass	4♣	Pass
Pass	Pass		

Hand 14
Love All, Dealer East

♠ 5 2
♥ 9
♦ A K 10 5 3
♣ 10 9 6 5 2

♠ 6 3
♥ K Q J 3
♦ Q J 7 2
♣ A K Q

N		E
W		
	S	

♠ A K Q J 10 9 8 7
♥ 7 6
♦ 6 4
♣ 7

♠ 4
♥ A 10 8 5 4 2
♦ 9 8
♣ J 8 4 3

South decides to lead the ♦9 against 4♣ and the hand looks easy to defend. However, there's *many a slip 'twixt cup and lip* and it's possible to slip up here. North may take dummy's Jack with the King and lead the ♥9. Now, what is South to do? Knowing North has the ♦A K and being unsure of the Heart position might he not play another Diamond? Provided declarer covers that in dummy the chance to defeat the contract has gone. "*How could I tell?*" will be the cry from South. In fact, this is really North's fault. He can see that the ♥A in the South hand is likely to lead to defeat for East – he should not put temptation in South's way. He should take the ♦J with the **Ace** and lead back a Heart. How could South do anything but play another Heart now? Now North cashes the ♦A and North-South live happily ever after.

West	North	East	South
	Pass	1♣ ¹	Pass
1♥	Pass	4♥	Pass
Pass	Pass		

Hand 15
North-South Game, Dealer South

♠ A 10 8 4 2
♥ 3 2
♦ J 5 3
♣ 10 9 8

♠ K 7 5
♥ 9 8 6 5
♦ K 8 4
♣ J 7 3

N		E
W		
	S	

♠ Q J 3
♥ Q J 10 4
♦ A 10
♣ A K Q 6

♠ 9 6
♥ A K 7
♦ Q 9 7 6 2
♣ 5 4 2

¹ Playing five-card majors. Might be a three-card suit.
North, not knowing if East has Clubs, leads the ♣10 against 4♥. West takes this in hand and naturally starts off by drawing trumps. South takes the King and switches to the ♠9. Now, seeing all four hands, the right defence is evident – North should duck this, enabling the defenders to take two high trumps, the ♠A and a Spade ruff. However, is this clear to North? Well, it should be obvious that South has the ♥A K (if West has the ♥A why not take the trump finesse?). Why could South not have a singleton Spade, though? Ah! That's the clever bit. If South had a singleton Spade and ♥A K x he should *cash two top trumps before playing a Spade*. This would force North to take the Ace of Spades to give his partner a ruff. The fact that he hasn't done that means he hasn't got that. If you see what I mean.

West	North	East	South
Pass	Pass	Pass	1♥
Pass	4♥	Pass	Pass
Pass			

Hand 16
East-West Game, Dealer West

♠ K J 8 4
♥ A 10 7 5 3
♦ Q 8 4
♣ 6

♠ Q 2
♥ 4 2
♦ A K 9 5 3
♣ 9 8 7 4

N		E
W		
	S	

♠ A 10 7 3
♥ 6
♦ 10 6 2
♣ K 10 5 3 2

♠ 9 6 5
♥ K Q J 9 8
♦ J 7
♣ A Q J

West leads the ♦K against 4♥ and East plays the Two. Assuming East has three Diamonds (rather than a singleton) how should West defend the hand? Well, there is a danger that a loser may be dumped on the ♦Q in due course, and the only suit that offers any promise for defensive tricks is Spades. East has to have the ♠A 10 to defeat this hand – and the right switch at trick two is the ♠Q. When that gets covered on table East has to duck – with the Seven, of course. How does East know that the ♠Q isn't singleton? Well, if it were, West would have cashed the ♦A first to ensure East took his ♠A quickly. This idea has echoes of Hand 15 and is a very difficult defence to find at the table. If East-West do find it declarer has nowhere to go for his tenth trick – East-West have the *tempo* to claim two Spades and two Diamonds.