

Board 1
South Deals
None Vul

♠	K J 9 2
♥	9 5 2
♦	8 5
♣	9 7 6 5

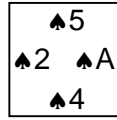


<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
			1 N
Pass	3 N	Pass	Pass
Pass			
Lead: ?			
Won NS=0 EW=0			

Board 1
 South Deals
 None Vul

♠ 7 5
 ♥ 8 7 3
 ♦ K Q 9
 ♣ A K 4 3 2

♠ K J 9 2
 ♥ 9 5 2
 ♦ 8 5
 ♣ 9 7 6 5



<i>Trick</i>	<i>Lead</i>	<i>2nd</i>	<i>3rd</i>	<i>4th</i>
1. W	♠ 2	5	<u>A</u>	4

Won NS=0 EW=1

It's 3N and the opponents didn't use Stayman. So lead a major. With a good major I like to lead that major.

Board 1
 South Deals
 None Vul

♠ 7 5
 ♥ 8 7 3
 ♦ K Q 9
 ♣ A K 4 3 2

♠	K J 9 2
♥	9 5 2
♦	8 5
♣	9 7 6 5

♠	7		
♠	J	♠	3
♠	10		

<i>Trick</i>	<i>Lead</i>	<i>2nd</i>	<i>3rd</i>	<i>4th</i>
1. W	♠ 2	5	<u>A</u>	4
2. E	♠ 3	10	<u>J</u>	7

Won NS=0 EW=2

What do we know?

What are the missing cards in spades?

♠ Q, ♠ 8, ♠ 6

What did partner return? ♠ 3.

That's the lowest missing spade so partner either has 2 more left or 0 left.

Board 1
 South Deals
 None Vul

♠ 7 5
 ♥ 8 7 3
 ♦ K Q 9
 ♣ A K 4 3 2

♠ K J 9 2
 ♥ 9 5 2
 ♦ 8 5
 ♣ 9 7 6 5



<i>Trick</i>	<i>Lead</i>	<i>2nd</i>	<i>3rd</i>	<i>4th</i>
1. W	♠ 2	5	<u>A</u>	4
2. E	♠ 3	10	<u>J</u>	7
3. W	?			

Won NS=0 EW=2

What should we do next?

Cash the ♠ K and hope that partner had 4 to begin with instead of declarer having 5.

Board 1
 South Deals
 None Vul

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

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
Pass	3 N	All pass	1 N
<i>Trick</i>	<i>Lead</i>	<i>2nd</i>	<i>3rd</i> <i>4th</i>
1. W	♠ 2	5	<u>A</u> 4
2. E	♠ 3	10	<u>J</u> 7
3. W	♠ K	-	- -

Partner lied to us! They should have returned the ♠ 8 to tell that they had 2 or 1 remaining at the time and so we wouldn't cash the ♠ K and set up declarer's protected ♠ Q.

Board 2
South Deals
None Vul

♠	Q 10 6 3
♥	A 9 6 2
♦	J 4
♣	9 8 6



<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
			2 N
Pass	3 N	Pass	Pass
Pass			
Lead: ?			
Won NS=0 EW=0			

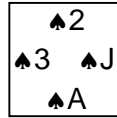
What to lead?

Board 2

South Deals
None Vul

♠ 9 2
♥ Q 10 7
♦ Q 9 8 3
♣ Q 10 3 2

♠ Q 10 6 3
♥ A 9 6 2
♦ J 4
♣ 9 8 6



<i>Trick</i>	<i>Lead</i>	<i>2nd</i>	<i>3rd</i>	<i>4th</i>
1. W	♠ 3	2	J	<u>A</u>

Won NS=1 EW=0

Again with no Stayman use we want to lead a major. When choosing between two 4 card suits to lead from, here's some ideas:

1. Try to lead the one without the ace. Aces are special in that they will win the trick if you lead them. They really want to capture an honor and you might let declarer win an honor in their hand that you could've captured later. Also you can use the ace as entry to enjoy the established trick in your other 4 card suit.

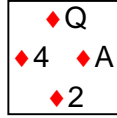
Note: This idea is akin to the declarer play concept of "set up your potential tricks before you take your sure ones."

2. Try to lead the suit with more honors. The more honors you have in a suit, typically the safer it is to lead. In fact, if you have enough length then if you have 3 or more honors you are guaranteed a trick in a suit if you only play one honor at a time.

Board 2
 South Deals
 None Vul

♠ 9 2
 ♥ Q 10 7
 ♦ Q 9 8 3
 ♣ Q 10 3 2

♠ Q 10 6 3
 ♥ A 9 6 2
 ♦ J 4
 ♣ 9 8 6



<i>Trick</i>	<i>Lead</i>	<i>2nd</i>	<i>3rd</i>	<i>4th</i>
1. W	♠ 3	2	J	<u>A</u>
2. S	♦ 2	4	Q	<u>A</u>

Won NS=1 EW=1

Clear time to play second hand low

Board 2
 South Deals
 None Vul

♠ 9 2
 ♥ Q 10 7
 ♦ Q 9 8 3
 ♣ Q 10 3 2

♠	Q 10 6 3
♥	A 9 6 2
♦	J 4
♣	9 8 6

♠	9		
♠	10	♠	7
♠	4		

<i>Trick</i>	<i>Lead</i>	<i>2nd</i>	<i>3rd</i>	<i>4th</i>
1. W	♠ 3	2	J	<u>A</u>
2. S	♦ 2	4	Q	<u>A</u>
3. E	♠ 7	4	<u>10</u>	9

Won NS=1 EW=2

Yay! Partner returned our suit. What should we be doing now?

Partner plays third hand high. so when they play the ♠ J, then they do not have the ♠ K.

Next what are the missing spade cards?

♠ K ♠ 8 ♠ 5

We know declarer has ♠ K.

Having returned the ♠ 7, there's one missing spade above and below it. So either partner has the ♠ 5 or they don't. They cannot have the higher card, the ♠ 8.

Hence declarer has either ♠ K8 or ♠ K85 left. Lead some other suit.

Board 2
 South Deals
 None Vul

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

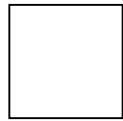
NS 3N; NS 5♣; NS 3♠; NS 3♦; NS 1♥; Par +400: NS 3N; NS 5♣

	West	North	East	South
				2 N
	Pass	3 N	All pass	
<i>Trick</i>	<i>Lead</i>	<i>2nd</i>	<i>3rd</i>	<i>4th</i>
1. W	♠ 3	2	J	<u>A</u>
2. S	♦ 2	4	Q	<u>A</u>
3. E	♠ 7	4	<u>10</u>	9

The missing spades are the ♠ K85. If partner had the ♠ K they'd have played it on trick 1 so we can safely place that card in declarer's hand. With 3 spades left partner would've returned low, so we're able to place partner with either the ♠ J75 or ♠ J7. In neither case is returning another spade helpful. Leading diamonds or hearts looks dangerous so we'll make the passive exit of the ♣ 9 and wait for our tricks.

Board 3
North Deals
None Vul

♠	K J 8 5
♥	9 8 2
♦	6 5
♣	K 8 6 4



<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
	Pass	Pass	1 N
Pass	3 N	Pass	Pass
Pass			
Lead: ?			
Won NS=0 EW=0			

What to lead?

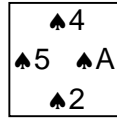
Board 3

North Deals

None Vul

♠ 7 4
♥ K 7 5
♦ J 10 9 8
♣ A Q 9 2

♠ K J 8 5
♥ 9 8 2
♦ 6 5
♣ K 8 6 4



<i>Trick</i>	<i>Lead</i>	<i>2nd</i>	<i>3rd</i>	<i>4th</i>
1. W	♠ 5	4	<u>A</u>	2

Won NS=0 EW=1

Once again without Stayman we want to lead a major. We could choose either hearts or spades here. Both are tempting. We have 7 points and expect partner to have between 1-8 HCP. Sometimes for me it's the spots that help me decide. The ♠ 8 is quite likely to be useful in setting up the long suit even if declarer has 4 of them. I think that from ♠ KJ32 I would lead a heart instead.

Board 3
 North Deals
 None Vul

♠ 7 4
 ♥ K 7 5
 ♦ J 10 9 8
 ♣ A Q 9 2

♠	K J 8 5
♥	9 8 2
♦	6 5
♣	K 8 6 4

♠	7		
♠	J	♠	9
♠	10		

<i>Trick</i>	<i>Lead</i>	<i>2nd</i>	<i>3rd</i>	<i>4th</i>
1. W	♠ 5	4	<u>A</u>	2
2. E	♠ 9	10	<u>J</u>	7

Won NS=0 EW=2

Woohoo! Partner had the ♠ A and returned the suit. Now what?

What cards are missing?

♠ Q, ♠ 6, ♠ 3

Who has ♠ Q?

Partner returned the ♠ 9 which is the highest missing spot. Therefore they had a doubleton or a singleton left. In any case that's their highest spade.

Ergo declarer has the ♠ Q.

Declarer must have at least one of the lower spade spots so the ♠ Q is protected.

Lead some other suit.

Board 3
 North Deals
 None Vul

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

♠ Q 10 6 2
♥ A Q J
♦ K Q 3 2
♣ J 10

NS 4♦; NS 2N; NS 2♠; NS 2♥; NS 2♣; Par +130; NS 1♦+3

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>	
	Pass	Pass	1 N	
Pass	3 N	All pass		
<i>Trick</i>	<i>Lead</i>	<i>2nd</i>	<i>3rd</i>	<i>4th</i>
1. W	♠ 5	4	<u>A</u>	2
2. E	♠ 9	10	<u>J</u>	7

The key is in the return of the ♠ 9. The missing spades at ♠ Q63. With only one higher spade missing partner shouldn't have 3 or more. That means they either have no spades left or just the ♠ 6 or the ♠ 3.

Could partner win another trick or is it time to cash out? Well we only had 7 to begin with so with 10 in dummy partner started with 6-8 HCP. After the ♠ A they have 2-4 HCP left. They could easily win another trick. Time to wait and exit with a passive card. I like the diamond for that as there's only one way to play the suit.

Board 4
 East Deals
 N-S Vul

♠ 6 4
 ♥ 9 7 3
 ♦ Q 9 5 2
 ♣ K 9 6 2

♥ 3
♥ Q ♥ 8
♥ K

♠ J 7 5
 ♥ 8 6 5 4
 ♦ 7 3
 ♣ A 10 5 3

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>	
		Pass	1 ♦	
1 ♠	2 ♦	Pass	3 N	
Pass	Pass	Pass		
<i>Trick</i>	<i>Lead</i>	<i>2nd</i>	<i>3rd</i>	<i>4th</i>
1. W	♥ Q	3	8	<u>K</u>
Won NS=1 EW=0				

Partner couldn't even be bothered to lead the suit they bid. Sheesh.

For those of you who are concerned about playing the ♥ 8, there are 4 missing honors in the suit when you signal. They are divided between 2 hands. There is no way that all 4 honors can be played on the next 2 tricks. Therefore by the time the honors are gone your ♥ 4 will be as good as your ♥ 8 since all of dummy's spots will be played. Whenever possible make the clearest signal possible to partner.

Board 4
 East Deals
 N-S Vul

♠ 6 4
 ♥ 9 7 3
 ♦ Q 9 5 2
 ♣ K 9 6 2

♣K
♣8 ♣A
♣7


♠ J 7 5
♥ 8 6 5 4
♦ 7 3
♣ A 10 5 3

<i>Trick</i>	<i>Lead</i>	<i>2nd</i>	<i>3rd</i>	<i>4th</i>
1. W	♥ Q	3	8	<u>K</u>
2. S	♣ 7	8	K	<u>A</u>

Won NS=1 EW=1

Now you're in, what should you play?

Board 4
 East Deals
 N-S Vul

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

NS 4♦; EW 2♠; EW 2♥; NS 1N; Par +130: NS 4♦

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>	
		Pass	1♦	
1♠	2♦	Pass	3N	
All pass				
<i>Trick</i>	<i>Lead</i>	<i>2nd</i>	<i>3rd</i>	<i>4th</i>
1. W	♥ Q	3	8	<u>K</u>
2. S	♣ 7	8	K	<u>A</u>

When switching to spades you need to count out the suit. Partner has at least 5, that leaves declarer with at most 3. If partner had the ♠ AK they should've led one of them. If partner had the ♠ KQT they probably would've led an honor then as well.

Partner probably has the ♠ AQ and declarer the ♠ K. We don't know who has the ♠ T. If we lead a low spade then all declarer needs to do is play small and force partner to win it. Then declarer's remaining ♠ Kx will be protected. Since we will need to repeat the "finesse", we should lead the ♠ J.

Bonus question: If declarer has crossed to dummy at trick 2 with a diamond would you have risen to the occasion by flying with the ♣ A in order to lead the ♠ J? Declarer must be trying to "steal" a ninth trick with this line of play.

Board 5
South Deals
None Vul

♠	K J 8 3
♥	9 8 2
♦	6 5
♣	K 8 6 4



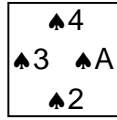
<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
			1 N
Pass	3 N	Pass	Pass
Pass			
Lead: ?			
Won NS=0 EW=0			

What to lead?

Board 5
 South Deals
 None Vul

♠ 7 4
 ♥ K 7 5
 ♦ Q J 9 8 3
 ♣ A Q 9

♠ K J 8 3
 ♥ 9 8 2
 ♦ 6 5
 ♣ K 8 6 4



<i>Trick</i>	<i>Lead</i>	<i>2nd</i>	<i>3rd</i>	<i>4th</i>
1. W	♠ 3	4	<u>A</u>	2

Won NS=0 EW=1

This hand is almost identical to the one in #3. Same logic applies here to lead a ♠ not a ♥.

Board 5
 South Deals
 None Vul

♠ 7 4
 ♥ K 7 5
 ♦ Q J 9 8 3
 ♣ A Q 9

♠ K J 8 3
♥ 9 8 2
♦ 6 5
♣ K 8 6 4

♠ 7
♠ J ♠ 6
♠ 10

<i>Trick</i>	<i>Lead</i>	<i>2nd</i>	<i>3rd</i>	<i>4th</i>
1. W	♠ 3	4	<u>A</u>	2
2. E	♠ 6	10	<u>J</u>	7

Won NS=0 EW=2

Now what?

What are the missing spades?

♠ Q, ♠ 9, ♠ 5

Who has the missing spades?

This is kind of ambiguous. When partner returned the ♠ 6 they could have:
 ♠ Q96, ♠ Q965, ♠ 6 or ♠ 65 left. What they cannot have is 3 spade spots.

Peering into our crystal ball we can see that our ♣ K is a sitting duck. And whatever diamond finesses declarer needs are working. Besides some declarers with ♠ QT92 would've played the ♠ 9 at trick 2. So let's cash the ♠ K and hope!

Board 5
 South Deals
 None Vul

	♠ 7 4			
	♥ K 7 5			
	♦ Q J 9 8 3			
	♣ A Q 9			
♠ K J 8 3		♠ A Q 9 6 5		
♥ 9 8 2		♥ 10 4 3		
♦ 6 5		♦ 10 7 4		
♣ K 8 6 4		♣ 5 3		
	♠ 10 2			
	♥ A Q J 6			
	♦ A K 2			
	♣ J 10 7 2			
<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>	
			1 N	
Pass	3 N	All pass		
<i>Trick</i>	<i>Lead</i>	<i>2nd</i>	<i>3rd</i>	<i>4th</i>
1. W	♠ 3	4	<u>A</u>	2
2. E	♠ 6	10	<u>J</u>	7

The missing spades are ♠ Q95

Either partner started with one of the ♠ A6, ♠ A65, ♠ AQ96 or ♠ AQ965

Which means declarer either started with ♠ T2, ♠ T52, ♠ QT92 or ♠ QT952.

You really cannot tell which is the case. However, if declarer has the ♠ Q9 then they have the 2nd and 3rd highest cards in the suit. Therefore they can already establish a trick without your help. In general I have found that letting declarer win tricks that they already can win is much safer than risking something else so I recommend cashing the ♠ K and hoping that you found partner's suit.