

Take a Moment

Bridge teachers have various mantras that they inflict on their pupils, one of which is not to rush the declarer play at trick one. Take time to consider the following

How many tricks do I have?

How many losers do I have?

Formulate a plan

What can go wrong?

What do I play from dummy?

Board 6 is a classic example of this. With E/W having 26 points you would want to be in game. With a 5-3 spade fit better to be in 4♠, but some will play in 3NT.

W	♠ A10542	E	♠ KQ8
	♥ J973		♥ K2
	♦ 9		♦ K10743
	♣ K42		♣ AQJ

With N/S silent the bidding will start with E - 1♦ - 1♠ - 2N - ?

Playing checkback, W can bid 3♣, if not 3♠ that would allow you to reach 4♠. Some may raise to 3N. Whichever defender is on lead, it is likely to be a passive club.

DF says you can make 4S but not 3N.

Starting with 4♠, look at the questions above.

Potentially five spades, three clubs and on a good day two red kings.

Losers are harder to judge.

Can I increase my chances? Possible heart ruff by East. Possible fifth diamond.

What if North has four spades to the J9?

I have a choice of winning the first trick.

It takes a lot of analysis to make ten tricks, basically you set up the fifth diamond, but many things can go wrong. Congratulations to Barbara who made 4♠, 12 imps contributed to their massive winning score. The other two declarers in 4♠ went one off, not surprising as there is nothing to steer you away from a less complicated line.