

May 8 2011

1
 ♠ QJ875
 ♥ K73
 ♦ A52
 ♣ 84
 ♠ 64
 ♥ J109
 ♦ Q104
 ♣ KQJ52
 ♠ 932
 ♥ Q85
 ♦ 9863
 ♣ A107
 ♠ AK10
 ♥ A642
 ♦ KJ7
 ♣ 963

Dealer: North

West	North	East	South
	Pass	Pass	1 NT
Pass	2 ♥	Pass	2 ♠
Pass	3 NT	Pass	4 ♠
Pass	Pass	Pass	

Opening Lead: ♣ K

After transferring to spades, North bids 3NT to give South a choice of games. With a doubleton spade, South would pass, but with 3 spades, South bids the spade game.

Dummy, with longer trumps, is the "master hand." Count potential losers in this hand. Two club losers and possibly a heart and a diamond.

Two chances for success: Hearts splitting 3-3, in which case the diamond loser can be pitched on 4th heart, or the diamond finesse could work.

Declarer must test hearts first. If the diamond finesse was tried first and lost, a heart loser is inevitable. But if three round of hearts are played first, and hearts don't split, the diamond finesse is a fall-back.

Lesson: The order in which suits are played is often important!

2
 ♠ 72
 ♥ J1054
 ♦ A3
 ♣ Q10632
 ♠ KQJ54
 ♥ AK72
 ♦ 97
 ♣ K4
 ♠ A98
 ♥ 93
 ♦ Q8542
 ♣ 975
 ♠ 1063
 ♥ Q86
 ♦ KJ106
 ♣ AJ8

Dealer: South

West	North	East	South
			Pass
1 ♠	Pass	2 ♠	Pass
4 ♠	Pass	Pass	Pass

Opening Lead: ♣ 3

West wins the second club and has two sure diamond losers, so must ruff two hearts in dummy. West plays the top hearts and ruffs a heart with the 8 of spades, then ruffs a club to get back to hand.

West leads the fourth heart and North follows, so West knows South is out of hearts.

Ruffing with the 9 of spades counts on North, not South, having the spade 10, a 50 percent shot. Ruffing with the ace counts on a 3-2 trump split (West can pull trumps after the ruff.) The latter is a 68 percent shot. West should ruff with the ace.

It pays to know the basic percentages!