

Board 1

North Deals
None Vul

♠ A Q 7 5 3
♥ K J 6
♦ 10 8 5 2
♣ Q

♠ J 9 8
♥ A Q 9
♦ A J 4 3
♣ 8 5 3

♠ 10 4
♥ 8 5 3 2
♦ K 7
♣ 9 7 6 4 2

♠ K 6 2
♥ 10 7 4
♦ Q 9 6
♣ A K J 10



West	North	East	South
	1 ♠	Pass	2 ♣
Pass	2 ♦ ¹	Pass	4 ♠ ²
All pass			

1. Showing his 5 ♠-4 ♦ shape
2. Knowing of the eight-card spade fit, and the values for game

East heard his opponents bid all three suits bar ♥s. It was clear to lead a ♥, but vital that East choose the ♥ 8 ("lead high for hate").

West won Trick 1 with ♥ A, but was not tempted to continue ♥s, instead playing for his only real chance of defeating the game (looking at dummy), partner holding ♦ K. AT trick 2 he switched to the three of diamonds ("lead low for like"). [Note that leading away from an ace is perfectly admissable after dummy is tabled.]

East won the ♦ K, returned his 2nd ♦. West won the ♦ J, cashed the ♦ A (down 1) and then, rubbing salt into declarer's wound, led a 4th ♦. With East's ten of trumps forcing out dummy's king, West's ♠ J98 was promoted into a trump trick. Down two.

Board 2

East Deals
N-S Vul

♠ Q 6 5 2
♥ 10
♦ A K 5 4 3
♣ 10 7 3

♠ 10 7 4
♥ K J 6 3
♦ Q J 10
♣ K Q 6

♠ K 3
♥ A Q 9 7 5 4 2
♦ 8 6
♣ A 4

♠ A J 9 8
♥ 8
♦ 9 7 2
♣ J 9 8 5 2



West	North	East	South
		1 ♥	Pass
3 ♥	Pass	4 ♥	All pass

South did not have an attractive lead. Rejecting a ♠ (leading away from an ace), and a singleton trump, he randomly chose ♦s ahead of ♣s, and picked the ♣ 9 ("lead high for hate").

North won Trick 1 with the ♦ K, then cashed the ♦ A. South necessarily followed with a lower diamond, and who can blame South for trying a third ♦, in the hope that North had been leading "top from 2"?

No good. Declarer could have discarded a ♠ and made an overtrick. Wisely, he played safely, ruffing the third ♦ high, drawing trumps, discarding a ♠ on dummy's third ♣, and merely conceding one ♠ at the end. 10 tricks and game made.

It would have been a different story had South begun with the ♦ 7. He could have then follow with the ♦ 9, advertising a third card, enabling North to switch to a low ♠ at Trick 3. South would beat declarer's ♠ K with the ♠ A, and return a 2nd ♠ to North's ♠ Q. Down one.

Board 3
South Deals
E-W Vul

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

♠ K J 10 7 6 3
♥ K Q
♦ Q 10 5
♣ K 7

West	North	East	South
Pass	2 ♣	Pass	1 ♠
Pass	4 ♠	All pass	2 ♠

Leading away from a broken sequence - such as West's diamonds - is a risky choice. However West rejects a ♥ (away from an Ace), and a ♣ (dummy's bid suit). A trump lead might work best, but West is rightly worried that dummy's clubs will provide declarer with discards. He therefore gambles that his partner holds either the ♦ A or ♦ Q, and leads the suit. The trouble is that his lowest ♦ is the ♦ 8 - will partner read it ?

East wins the ♦ 8 lead with the ♦ A, (declarer following with the ♦ 5), and his first thoughts are that his partner has made a "high for hate" lead. He considers leading a ♥ - switching to dummy's weakest suit. Fortunately, before he turns over the first trick and releases the heart, East examines the ♦ spot cards more carefully. He sees that there is no lower ♦ than the ♦ 8 for West to hold. Dummy has three lower ones, he has two, and declarer has followed with the 6th and final lower ♦. Relatively speaking, the ♦ 8 is low. East puts the ♥ back in his hand, and leads a 2nd ♦, choosing the ♦ 7 (top from 2 remaining). Phew! West beats declarer's ♦ 10 with the ♦ J, cashes the ♦ K (defeating declarer's ♦ Q), and follows by tabling the ♥ A. DOWN one.

You can see that if East had returned a ♥ at Trick 2, West would never score his ♦ J. Only a ♦ lead from East, crucially through declarer's queen-ten, secures a trick for that card.

Board 4
West Deals
Both Vul

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

♠ A 8 3
♥ Q 6 3
♦ 7 5 4
♣ 10 8 5 3

West	North	East	South
1 NT ¹	Pass ²	3 NT ³	All pass

1. Could be forgiven for balking at the idea of opening 1 NT - with that aceless 4333 12 point hand
2. Close to a 2 ♥ overcall, but the adverse vulnerability is off-putting
3. No point in even mentioning diamonds, as 3 NT is the only realistic game in the picture

North leads ♥ 4, and see partner's ♥ Q lose to declarer's ♥ K. At trick 2 declarer leads a ♦, and you win your singleton ace. What next ?

You know that declarer holds the ♥ J - with the ♥ QJ, partner would have played the ♥ J at Trick 1 (the cheaper of the equals). A second ♥ lead from you will not be a successful defence, for whatever you lead low or the ♥ A, declarer's ♥ J will be promoted. (Unless in the unlikely scenario that declarer started with ♥ KJ doubleton)

You need partner to lead a 2nd ♥, crucially through declarer's ♥ J. To this end, you must try to put partner on play. Looking at dummy, there is only one suit that offers any hope; ♠s. So you switch to the ♠ 2 right ? Wrong. If you switch to the ♠ 2, partner will think that you want a ♠ return. This is entirely possible from partner's perspective. You must switch to the ♠ 9 (key play), a "high for hate" lead. Partner will win the ♠ A, and you will now know not to return a ♠, but rather a ♥. South's ♥ 6 return will beat the game (by two tricks), declarer's ♥ 9 losing to your ♥ 10, the ♥ A then felling the ♥ J, and the ♥ 72 cashed. A good defender communicates effectively with their partner.

Board 5

North Deals
N-S Vul

♠ K Q 8 5
♥ Q 6 4
♦ A K J
♣ J 10 7

♠ 10 6 4
♥ A 10 7 5 3
♦ 9 6 5 3
♣ A



♠ J 7
♥ 2
♦ Q 10 7 4 2
♣ 9 5 4 3 2

♠ A 9 3 2
♥ K J 9 8
♦ 8
♣ K Q 8 6

West	North	East	South
	1 ♠	Pass	4 ♦ ¹
Pass	4 ♠ ²	All pass	

1. Splinter Bid - a raise to (at least) 4 ♠ with ♦ shortage
2. Signing off - wasted diamond values

East was pleased his singleton was the ♥ 2 (no top-from-two/high-for-hate ambiguity). West won the ♥ A, cashed his singleton ♣ A (key play - to facilitate the defensive crossruff), then returned a second ♥.

East ruffed, led a second ♣ for West to ruff, ruffed a third ♥, then led a third ♣ for West to ruff again.

Declarer could ruff West's fourth ♥ (high), draw trumps, and claim the remainder, but he was down three.

Board 6

East Deals
E-W Vul

♠ 10 9
♥ 9 4
♦ A 9 7 4 2
♣ A 8 6 3

♠ A J 8 4 2
♥ K 5
♦ J 8
♣ J 10 7 2



♠ K Q 5
♥ A J 7 6 3
♦ 10
♣ K Q 9 5

♠ 7 6 3
♥ Q 10 8 2
♦ K Q 6 5 3
♣ 4

West	North	East	South
		1 ♥	Pass
1 ♠	Pass	2 ♣	Pass
3 ♣	Pass	3 ♠	Pass
4 ♠	All pass		

Listening to the auction and thinking, Shape made all the difference to North's lead. Look at his hand plus the auction, and see if you replicate his winning choice.

First thoughts may be to lead a ♦ - the unbid suit. No good - think more deeply.

East-West have bid and supported ♣s. They must hold four cards. Any ideas now ?

Right - partner can only hold one ♣. Lead the ♣ A! Ignore the size of partner's card (knowing he has no choice), and lead a 2nd ♣.

South ruffs (no surprise), and returns the ♦ K. Overtake it with the ♦ A (you only have one diamond trick, and must regain the lead). Then lead a third ♣. South ruffs again - down one.

Perhaps you should have doubled ?!

Board 7
South Deals
Both Vul

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



West	North	East	South
Pass	2 ♣	Pass	1 ♠
Pass	4 ♠	All pass	2 ♠

Dummy had bid ♣s, but West was not overly concerned - look at his club holding. Worried only about a possible ruffing value in dummy, West led a trump. This was the only lead to beat the game (with a second trump to lead, should declarer duck a heart, preparatory to a thirds-round ruff). Try as he might (and he did), declarer was unavoidably down one.

A ♥/♣ opening lead enables declarer to ruff his third ♥ in dummy for his tenth trick, and the ♦ A lead promotes dummy's ♦ J. Game made.

Board 8
West Deals
None Vul

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



West	North	East	South
1 ♥	Dbl ¹	1 ♠ ²	2 ♦ ³
2 ♥	3 ♦	Dbl ⁴	All pass

1. Normal take-out double
2. Ignoring the double
3. Very marginal, but South wants to push his opponents a tad higher, in the light of their part-score
4. For penalties

West led his singleton ♦ J trump against the doubled part-score. East carefully overtaking with the ♦ Q (in case declarer ducked).

Declarer won the ♦ A, and led a ♣ to the ♣ K (not best - but reasonable). East won the ace, and fired back the ♦ 10, West discarding a ♠. Winning dummy's ♦ K, declarer led a low ♣.

East alertly rose with the ♣ J, keen to win the lead in order to draw trumps. West underplayed the ♣ J with his ♣ 10, enabling his partner to cash the ♦ 98 trumps (drawing all the opposing trumps), whilst he threw a second spade and a heart. East then switched to the ♥ 8.

Declarer was not enjoying proceedings one bit. He won dummy's ♥ A and tried a 3rd ♣, but the writing was on the wall. Indeed West's hand was now high - the master card in ♠s and ♣s, plus 3 winning ♥s. Declarer had garnered just the ♦ AK trumps, and the ♥ A. Down 6 and a massive 1700 points to East-West.

On say, the ♥ K lead, declarer could scramble (at least) 6 tricks. Getting out for -800 to save game and rubber would be poor, but no cataclysm.

Board 9

North Deals
E-W Vul

♠ Q 9 7

♥ Q J 10 8 6 2

♦ 10 4

♣ A K

♠ A 8 5 3

♥ K 5

♦ 8 7 2

♣ Q J 5 3



♠ K J 2

♥ 7 4 3

♦ K 6 3

♣ 10 9 8 6

♠ 10 6 4

♥ A 9

♦ A Q J 9 5

♣ 7 4 2

West	North	East	South
	1 ♥	Pass	2 ♦
Pass	2 ♥	Pass	4 ♥ ¹
All pass			

1. Pushing hard for the vulnerable game.

Dummy's ♦ bid is worrying, for your ♦ Kxx sitting under the strength looks very vulnerable. The ♣ lead rates to be too slow, so lead an attacking ♠ in the hope that partner holds the ♠ Q or ♠ A. It's probably your only chance.

East lead a ♠. Bingo !

On any other lead, declarer can succeed. Say East leads a ♣; declarer wins, and delaying trumps, runs the ♦ 19 at Trick 2. A 2nd ♦ to the ♦ J, then the ♦ A, enable him to discard a ♠ (because ♦ s split 3-3)

On a ♠ lead, West won the ♠ A, and led a second round. East won the ♠ J, cashed the ♠ K, and West had to score the ♥ K. Down one.

Board 10

East Deals
Both Vul

♠ 9 7 3 2

♥ A Q 10 4 2

♦ 6 2

♣ 5 2

♠ A J 6 4

♥ K 7 6

♦ K Q 8

♣ 9 8 4



♠ K Q

♥ 9 8 3

♦ A J 10 5 4

♣ Q 10 7

♠ 10 8 5

♥ J 5

♦ 9 7 3

♣ A K J 6 3

West	North	East	South
		1 NT	Pass
3 NT	All pass		

A bit of fun (but not for declarer) testifying the importance of the lead. South led the ♣ A (North discouraging with the ♣ 2 - "throw low means no"), then switched to the ♥ J (top from two).

Declarer covered with the ♥ K, but North won with the ♥ A. cashed the ♥ QT, and followed with the ♥ 42. He then reverted to his second ♣. South covered declares ♣ 10 with the ♣ J, cashed the ♣ K (felling the ♣ Q) and scored the ♣ 63. Down six !

4th highest ♣ lead and they make game !!