

Board 1
South Deals
E-W Vul

♠ K Q 9
♥ A K J
♦ A 7 5 2
♣ K Q 6

♠ A J 10 6 3
♥ 7 5 4
♦ 9 8 6
♣ 7 4

♠ 7 4
♥ Q 10 3
♦ J 4 3
♣ J 10 9 3 2

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
			Pass
Pass	2 ♣	Pass	2 ♦
Pass	2 NT	Pass	3 NT
Pass	Pass	Pass	

3 NT by North

<i>Trick</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>	<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>
1. E	♠ J	♠ 4	♠ 2!	-

We have three honors in our Spade suit. Versus notrump, when we have three or four honors, we lead top-of-sequence (in this case, the Jack).

Notice how the proper opening lead of the Spade Jack pays off. It establishes four tricks for East, while giving declarer the one Spade trick which he was always entitled to. The 4th-best Spade Six would be a disastrous opening lead - Notice that declarer's Nine would win trick one cheaply.

At the end of trick one, East knows the layout of the "top five" Ace, King, Queen, Jack, and Ten.

Board 3
North Deals
N-S Vul

♠ 9 4 3
♥ 7 2
♦ 10 8 2
♣ 9 8 5 4 2

♠ J 10 6 5
♥ A 8 5
♦ J 7 6 5
♣ J 10

♠ A K 8
♥ Q 6 4
♦ A K Q
♣ A K Q 3

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
	Pass	Pass	2 ♣
Pass	2 ♦	Pass	3 NT
Pass	Pass	Pass	

3 NT by South

<i>Trick</i>	<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
1. W	♥ J	♥ 2	♥ A!	-

On the first trick, East must play the Heart Ace on partner's Heart Jack. Partner's Heart Jack promises the Heart Ten and denies the Heart Queen. So declarer has the Heart Queen and will win it on this trick unless East plays the Heart Ace. If West has the Heart King (in addition to the Jack and Ten), South's Heart Queen is trapped. Hoping for West to hold the Heart King, East returns the Heart Eight (top-of-doubleton) - Success!

If Declarer is allowed to win Trick one, he will collect the first eleven tricks.

Board 2
West Deals
Both Vul

♠ Q 10 8 6
♥ 8 5 2
♦ A 10 3
♣ 10 7 2

♠ A K 2
♥ K Q 9
♦ K Q J
♣ K Q J 9

♠ J 9 7
♥ A J 10 6 3
♦ 9 6 4
♣ A 3

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
	Pass	2 ♣	Pass
2 ♦	Pass	2 NT	Pass
Pass	Pass		

2 NT by East

<i>Trick</i>	<i>South</i>	<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>
1. S	♥ J	♥ 4	♥ 2!	-

On the lead of the Heart Jack, the only Heart trick declarer is entitled to is the Heart King (or Queen). But South cannot lead Hearts again without giving declarer a second Heart trick. South has to wait until North gains the lead to get a Heart led through declarer's remaining honor.

South builds TWO Heart tricks for Declarer by releasing the Heart Ace prematurely (Trick 1 or Trick 3).

As an experiment, replay the hand leading the 4th-best Heart 6: notice that declarer wins trick one cheaply. Also try opening lead Heart Ace.

Board 4
East Deals
E-W Vul

♠ Q 10 7
♥ 9 8 4
♦ A 7 6
♣ K Q 10 9

♠ A K 9 8 2
♥ A K 5
♦ 5 4
♣ A 6 3

♠ 6 5 4
♥ Q 7 6
♦ K Q J 9
♣ 8 5 4

♠ J 3
♥ J 10 3 2
♦ 10 8 3 2
♣ J 7 2

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
		Pass	Pass
1 ♠	Pass	2 ♠	Pass
4 ♠	Pass	Pass	Pass

4 ♠ by West

<i>Trick</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>	<i>West</i>
1. N	♣ K	♣ 4	♣ 7!	-

North leads the (top-of-sequence) Club King and wins trick one. A skilled Declarer would hold up with either Ace-Jack-small or Ace-small-small.

A puzzlement: If Declarer has Ace-Jack-small (and thus South all small cards), North must discontinue the suit. If Declarer has Ace-small-small (and thus South holds the Jack), North must continue to build Club tricks. How does North know what to do? Thanks to partner's encouraging Club Seven signal at trick one (showing the Ace or Jack), North continues to build Clubs at trick two.

Board 5
South Deals
Both Vul

♠ Q 7 6
 ♥ J 10 4
 ♦ K Q 5 3
 ♣ 8 7 4

♠ 10 5 3 2
 ♥ 7 5
 ♦ A J 9 2
 ♣ 6 5 2

♠ A K J
 ♥ K Q 9 8 2
 ♦ 8 4
 ♣ A J 3

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
			1 ♥
Pass	2 ♥	Pass	4 ♥
Pass	Pass	Pass	

4 ♥ by South

<i>Trick</i>	<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
1. W	♣ K	♣ 4	♣ 2!	-

West leads the Club King and wins trick one. A skilled Declarer would hold up with either Ace-Jack-small or Ace-small-small.

If Declarer has Ace-Jack-small (and thus East all small cards), West must discontinue the suit. If Declarer has Ace-small-small (and thus East holds the Jack), West must continue to build Club tricks.

Can West safely continue Clubs? Not without making declarer's Jack good and West knows this because he saw partner's Two (denying either the Club Ace or the Club Jack) at trick one. Clubs must wait.

Board 6
West Deals
None Vul

♠ 10 9 6
 ♥ Q 10 9 6 4 3
 ♦ 5 2
 ♣ A 4

♠ 7 3
 ♥ K J 5
 ♦ A Q 4 3
 ♣ K Q J 10

♠ Q 5 4 2
 ♥ A
 ♦ K J 10 9
 ♣ 9 7 6 3

♠ A K J 8
 ♥ 8 7 2
 ♦ 8 7 6
 ♣ 8 5 2

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
1 NT	Pass	2 ♣	Pass
2 ♦	Pass	3 NT	Pass
Pass	Pass		

3 NT by West

<i>Trick</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>	<i>West</i>
1. N	♥ 10	♥ A	♥ 2!	-

South follows with the Heart Two to deny any help in Hearts. When North wins the Club Ace, he knows that he will be leading fruitlessly into declarer's strength if he leads another Heart. So, what other suit?

Clubs: Declarer is trying to build Club tricks - nah.

Diamonds: The K-J-T-9 in Dummy look like another promotable trick source for Declarer.

Spades: Maybe the Defenders can trap the Spade Queen if North leads the suit. North has a nice sequence (T-9) to lead.

Hopefully, North leads the Spade Ten - sho'nuff

Board 7
North Deals
E-W Vul

♠ J 8 6
 ♥ A 4 3
 ♦ A J 4
 ♣ K Q J 10

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

♠ A
 ♥ Q 8 5 2
 ♦ K Q 9 5
 ♣ 9 7 6 3

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
	1 NT	Pass	2 ♣
Pass	2 ♦	Pass	3 NT
Pass	Pass	Pass	

3 NT by North

<i>Trick</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>	<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>
1. E	♠ 5	♠ A	♠ 9!	-

East leads a fourth-best Spade Five and Dummy's Ace wins. East wonders if Spades are a defensive trick source or a dangerous cul-de-sac. Good news - Partner's encouraging Spade Nine signal shows spade help (a high card). As long as East leads a low Spade when in with the Club Ace, the contract is defeated. The low Spade continuation from East help Partner play "high card from the short side". If East foolishly leads a high Spade (in this case, the Spade King), the suit will block.

The attitude signal at trick-one helps East.

Board 8
East Deals
Both Vul

♠ Q J 4 3 2
 ♥ K 2
 ♦ 9 8 2
 ♣ J 5 3

♠ 9 8 7
 ♥ 8 7
 ♦ K Q 6 4
 ♣ A 9 6 2

♠ A K 5
 ♥ 10 6 5 3
 ♦ A J 10
 ♣ K Q 10

♠ 10 6
 ♥ A Q J 9 4
 ♦ 7 5 3
 ♣ 8 7 4

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
		1 NT	Pass
2 NT	Pass	3 NT	Pass
Pass	Pass		

3 NT by East

<i>Trick</i>	<i>South</i>	<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>
1. S	♥ Q	♥ 7	♥ K!	-

South shows a three or four card honor group by leading the Heart Queen. Is there any reason for North to play the Heart King at trick one? Yes, the Heart suit will block if North does not unblock the King and return a Heart.

Whenever you have a doubleton honor (as Declarer or Defender), consider that the suit may block if you retain the honor on the first round of the suit. The danger is that you win the honor on the second round of the suit and have no more low cards to play.