

#192 Dlr: North
Vul: N-S

North
S. Q103
H. A87
D. 62
C. KQJ87

West
S. KJ52
H. QJ4
D. AQ3
C. A102

East
S. A98
H. 10932
D. K1084
C. 96

South
S. 764
H. K65
D. J975
C. 543

North	East	South	West
1C	Pass	Pass	Dbl.
Pass	1H	Pass	1NT
All Pass			

Opening lead: CK

Bidding Commentary: North has a **mandatory** opening with 12 HCP and a five card suit. A reopening bid of 1NT in the passout seat (West), shows 11-14 HCP. West is too strong. To show 15-17 HCP, West doubles and then bids 1NT.

Defensive Commentary: North continues with high clubs until West wins the ace.

Play Commentary: West has six top tricks with chances for more in three suits. If diamonds break or the DJ drops, an extra trick is available there. If the spade finesse works, an extra trick or two is available there. In hearts, if you are willing to give up the lead twice, two certain extra tricks are available there. Mirror, mirror on the wall, which is the best suit of all?

As West, ask yourself how many tricks **they** can take once they get the lead. The answer is that you are in danger of losing four clubs, max, plus the AK of hearts for six. The idea is not to increase that count if possible. If you can establish tricks in a suit or suits where tricks have to be lost anyway, that's the suit for you. The mirror says: "Attack hearts. Don't worry about diamonds or spades, just drive out the AK of hearts." Why increase **their** trick count when you don't have to. However in a contract of 2NT or 3NT, you can't afford to let them in even once! You have to bring in diamonds and spades for the desired number of tricks. The last suit to attack is hearts!

#194 Dlr: West
Vul: Both

North
S. J1098
H. J542
D. KQJ9
C. 5

West	East
S. A52	S. 763
H. 6	H. AKQ987
D. 8432	D. A6
C. AKQJ6	C. 92

South
S. KQ4
H. 103
D. T75
C. 108743

West	North	East	South
1C	Pass	1H	Pass
2C	Pass	4H	All Pass

Opening lead: SK

Bidding Commentary: West should rebid a **powerful** 5 card suit rather than rebid 1NT with a small singleton in partner's suit. East wants to be in game and leaps to 4H. A jump to 3H would be invitational, **not** forcing. The one who knows, goes. To angle for 3NT, East must bid 2D, forcing, looking for a spade stopper.

Defensive Commentary: Assuming the SA is played from dummy, North signals with the SJ. When partner leads and dummy takes the trick, 3rd hand holding an honor sequence headed by the jack, queen or king, plays the **highest** honor in the sequence. The same honor that third hand would have led had third hand been on lead.

Play Commentary: As East, after winning the SA and play the AKQ of hearts you find North with Jxxx. You have two fast (can be taken when they get in) spade losers, one slow (eventual) diamond loser and one heart loser. If you want to play **safe** for 4H (never too bad an idea), give up the heart trick. Let the opponents take two spades, but the diamond loser goes off on a club. The reason you can afford to give up a heart with those great looking clubs in dummy is because the opponents cannot take **enough** fast tricks to defeat you. If you attack clubs before giving up a heart, the second club could be ruffed and down you go. You lose 2 spades and 1 diamond. Unlucky. At tournament bridge where overtricks are vital, play clubs before a 4th heart.

Say you have the DKQ, not the A6. Now you have 3 **fast losers plus the heart**. **Now you have attack clubs before giving up a heart hoping North has at least two clubs**. **If so, you will make either four or five depending upon how many clubs North has**.

#193 Dlr: North
Vul: E-W

	North	
	S. K6	
	H. AQ10	
	D. AQJ9	
	C. 8432	
West		East
S. 10942		S. QJ875
H. KJ87		H. 9654
D. 832		D. 64
C. A5		C. K6
	South	
	S. A3	
	H. 32	
	D. K1075	
	C. QJ1097	

North	East	South	West
1NT	Pass	3NT	All Pass

Opening lead: S7

Bidding Commentary: With 5-4 in the minors along with two doubetons and no slam interest, South treats the hand as balanced and bids accordingly.

Lead Commentary: Suits headed by the QJ8x(x) are not considered sequence suits at notrump and a 4th best card is led. To lead a queen at notrump you need a suit headed by the QJ10, QJ9 or the AQJ. At a suit contract the queen is led from any QJ combination because at a suit contract **two, not three**, adjacent honors are considered a sequence.

Play Commentary: As North, you have seven top tricks and can easily set up three more in clubs. That is, it would be easy if the opponents couldn't set up their spades first! But they can. Even if the opposing spades are divided 5-4, as evenly as possible, the opponents can set up three spade tricks **before** you can set up your clubs. You can't win the spade-club race. You must look elsewhere for two extra tricks. 'Elsewhere' is hearts. You need **three** heart tricks. This means finding West with both the king and jack. It's your only chance. Win the spade lead in dummy and lead a heart to the ten. Now open your eyes. Guess what? The ten has won the trick. Now all you have to do is repeat the heart finesse for nine tricks.

When you have a choice between a low chance play (double heart finesse) or a no chance play (driving out the AK of clubs), take the low percentage play. Live a little.

#191 Dlr: West
Vul: E-W

North
S. 73
H. KQ65
D. A94
C. A976

West
S. KQ10952
H. 94
D. Q83
C. 52

East
S. J86
H. J1087
D. J752
C. 43

South
S. A4
H. A32
D. K106
C. KQJ108

West North East South
2S Dbl. Pass 6C!
All Pass

Opening lead: SK

Bidding Commentary: Of course there are other ways of bidding the South hand, but 6C figures to be a reasonable contract facing most any sane takeout double of 2S.

Play Commentary: Counting winners you have 11: 5 clubs, 3 hearts, 2 diamonds and 1 spade. Counting losers you have 2, a spade and a diamond. So far so good. Your losers and winners add up to 13.

Play Commentary #2: You have several chances to make this hand. On a good day hearts will break 3-3. However, if they don't, you still have a throw-in play available to force the opponents to break diamonds. Win the SA noticing that both you and dummy each remain with one spade, the perfect setting for an eventual throw-in play, an evenly divided suit with a loser. Draw trump and play three rounds of hearts. Assuming hearts don't break (otherwise you have 12 tricks), ruff a heart, stripping hearts from both your hand and dummy, and exit a spade forcing a diamond return.

Take a good look at diamonds. You are missing the QJ and **they** have to lead the suit. No matter which diamond they lead, (an honor is their best bet) your best bet is to play for **split honors**. For example, if West wins the spade exit and leads a low diamond, play low from dummy, capture East's jack and lead a low diamond to the nine playing West for the queen. If West exits with the DQ, win the ace in dummy and lead a low diamond to the ten playing East for the jack. Play the same if East wins the spade exit.