

**WOULD YOU BID THIS GRAND SLAM?
WOULD YOU THEN MAKE THIS GRAND SLAM?**

S A K 8 4
H K 10 9 5
D A Q 5 4
C 10

S	N	S Q J 9 6 3 2
1S	2NT*	H ----
4C **	4NT	D 86
6H ***	7S****	C A K Q 6 5

This hand came up recently when Alex and I were playing.

*Jacoby 2NT showing 13 + points and at least 4 of partner's major.

** 4C shows another suit, at least 5 cards in length and two of the top 3 honors in that suit.

*** 6H showed a void in Hearts and ONE key card.

**** 7S was an overbid but you are in the grand slam . All you have to do is make it!

If the bidding perplexes you, just ignore and focus on the final contract.

Opening lead is H Queen by West.

Plan your play! Answer below.

ANSWER



S A K 8 4
H K 10 9 5
D A Q 5 4
C 10

S 10
H Q J 10 4 3 2
D J2
C J732

S 75
H A76
D K10973
C 984

S	N	S Q J 9 6 3 2
1S	2NT*	H ----
4C **	4NT	D 86
6H ***	7S****	C A K Q 6 5

Opening lead is Heart Q by West. It should be clear that West does not have the H Ace. So it is pointless to cover with the King.

Finesses (in Diamonds) work 50% of the time. Can you find a better plan?

Ruff H in your hand. C Ace and ruff C with S Ace in dummy (in case). Play H8 and ruff in hand (you are hoping that the H Ace will fall on the third round).

S3 to S K in dummy. Everyone follows. Another H from dummy & ruff in hand. Lo and behold the H Ace drops. Draw remaining trump and claim.

If H Ace did NOT drop, then odds are high in your favor for the Club suit to break 4-3. So, when you play the CK and Q, discarding two D from dummy, the C 6 is now high and you can discard one more D from dummy. You will have ruffed a D in dummy and also a C.

A challenging hand. Partner's fault for putting you under so much pressure!!

PLANNING THE DEFENCE

Excerpt from Barbara Seagram's & David Bird's new book coming out this fall. Modelled after Planning the Play of a Bridge Hand, this book teaches you how to make a plan to defeat your opponents.

S Q 7 4 3
H 962
D AKQJ7
C J

S KJ95
H Q1075
D 10863
C 7

S A106
H AJ83
D 952
C 1085

N	S	S 82
		H K4
1D	2C	D 4
2D	5C	C AKQ96432

West leads the H 5 and you win with the H A. It is entirely possible that West has led from the H K, in which case you will be able to score two hearts and the S A to beat the game. How will you proceed?

It would be poor defense to play another heart at trick two. As you see, declarer holds the H K here. He will win, draw trumps and claim an overtrick. Instead you should lead the S A. Since West holds the S K, and does not have the H K, he will encourage a spade continuation with an attitude signal of the S 9. A second round of spades will then sink the contract.

If West held the H K and no S K, he would have played his lowest spade at trick two - a discouraging attitude signal. You would then switch back to hearts, hoping to strike gold there.

DEFENSIVE PLAN (East): At trick two I will play the S A. Partner's attitude signal in spades will assist me to judge which major suit I should lead at trick three.

LEGAL PEEKING AT OPPONENTS' CARDS

S 7 5 3
H A Q 4
D A J 10
C A J 8 2

S A K Q 10 9 6 2	S J 8
H 9 5 3	H 8
D 9 7	D 8 6 5 4 2
C 6	C Q 7 5 4 3

S 4
H K J 10 7 6 2
D K Q 3
C K 10 9

<u>West</u>	<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>South</u>
3 S	Dbl	Pass	4 NT
Pass	5 S	Pass	6 H
All Pass			

We may not all agree with the bidding but this is how it went with the particular pair that bid this. Since a trump suit had not been agreed upon, the pair used old-fashioned Blackwood now to arrive at 6 H.

South realizes that if he loses a C trick, he will be down one. He plans to postpone leading the C suit and tries to get more information.

West led S Ace, followed by the S King. South ruffed and crossed to dummy with the H Q. He led the third S from dummy and ruffed it in his hand.

DISCOVERY: West started with SEVEN S and East started with TWO S. So let's focus on counting the West hand. It is always easier to count a hand that has one very long suit. South led more trumps. On the second round of trump, East failed to follow.

DISCOVERY: West started with three H (and seven S) Declarer drew West's last trump and now started on the D suit. On the third round of D, West failed to follow.

DISCOVERY: West started with two D
(and three H and seven S) That means that West can only have one C.

Declarer now played the C Ace and led a small C from dummy and played the C10 from his hand, **KNOWING** that West could not have another C.

Moral of this story: When you have a problem suit and a finesse has to be taken, postpone playing that suit until you have played the other suits and managed to glean more information about how many cards the opponents hold in those suits. That will ultimately reveal how many cards are in each hand in the problem suit and will help you know how to play that suit.