

**Board 2**

East Deals  
N-S Vul

		♠ K Q 4		
		♥ 9 8 6		
		♦ 8 4		
		♣ Q 10 9 8 7		
♠ 8 7 5			♠ 6 3	
♥ 7 4 2			♥ A K Q 5 3	
♦ Q 10 5 3 2			♦ 9 6	
♣ J 4			♣ K 5 3 2	
		♠ A J 10 9 2		
		♥ J 10		
		♦ A K J 7		
		♣ A 6		
<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>	
		1 ♥	Dbf	
Pass	2 ♣	Pass	2 ♠	
Pass	4 ♠	Pass	Pass	
Pass				

**Auction Commentary:** South has a hand that is too good to overcall 1 ♠, so they start with a double. When they bid 2 ♠, a new suit, over partner's response to their takeout double, they show at least 18 points with a good five-card suit. With excellent trump support and a good club suit, North jumps to game.

**Opening Lead:** ♥ 2. Since West did not raise, they lead low to show at least 3 cards in partner's suit. East will likely win and play two more high hearts.

**Play Commentary:** South has the potential to lose 5 tricks; 2 ♥, 2 ♦ and 1 ♣. There is nothing to be done about the clubs and hearts; what about the diamonds? There are two reasonable options. We could try and set up dummy's clubs for diamond discards. However, even if we establish the club suit, we will need trumps to be divided 3-2, or we won't be able to get back to the dummy to enjoy them. A better plan is to ruff the diamonds in the dummy.

When East plays their third high heart, if you were paying attention to the cards West played, ♥ 2 and then a higher heart, you will know that it is safe to ruff low. This is important! When we ruff our diamonds in the dummy, we will want to use the honors, otherwise, East may overruff, and down we go. If the trumps are 4-1, we will need all of our high ones. If West had led ♥ 7 and then played ♥ 2, you would have no choice but to ruff high, and then would have to guess whether or not it was safe to ruff low in the dummy or whether to hope that trumps are 3-2.

**Takeaway:** As always, thinking about your plan at the beginning of the hand is a necessity. In addition to deciding what to ruff with at trick 3, you need to realize that drawing trump immediately all but guarantees going down. Before robotically pulling the enemy trump, we have to decide whether or not we need to use dummy's trumps to ruff our losers before we pull the opponents' trumps.

**Board 4**

West Deals  
Both Vul

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

  

♠ 10 8	♠ 10 8
♥ 7 3 2	♥ 7 3 2
♦ Q 10 2	♦ Q 10 2
♣ K Q J 10 9	♣ K Q J 10 9



<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
1 ♥	Pass	1 ♠	Pass
2 ♣	Pass	3 ♠	Pass
4 ♠	All pass		

**Auction Commentary:** East's 3 ♠ bid is invitational; it is a jump in an "old" suit. East has only 9 HCP, but having a seven card suit makes the hand easily worth an invitation. West has only a minimum in terms of high cards, but the excellent cards in East's suit should sway them to accept the invitation. When partner invites, look for an excuse to accept, not to decline.

**Opening Lead:** ♣ K is obvious, everyone would lead it, but it doesn't work out on this hand. :(

**Play Commentary:** East starts with at most 4 losers, 2 ♦ and 1 or 2 ♥. The ♥ A is either outside, or it's not, and unless you are luckier than I am, it's not. Thankfully, we can ruff a diamond in the dummy IF we don't touch trumps. Win the ♣ A and play a diamond. East should play low from their hand. It isn't important here, but it is a technique to maintain communication between the hands by saving the ♦ A until the next round. South will win, and too late, switches to a trump. Win the ♠ A and play the other diamond, winning, and ruff the third diamond. You come back to hand, pull trumps, and discover to your shock that, once again, the ♥ is behind the King. Try not to let it bother you, after all, you did make your contract.

**Takeaway:** If you played on auto-pilot by winning the ♣ A and beginning to draw trumps, hopefully the opponents rose to the occasion and played a second round of trumps. We will never get tired of gently reminding you that the time to make your plans is before it's too late to execute them.

If South had led a trump, the defender who won the diamond trick could have played a second trump, and down goes declarer. Does that mean the ♣ K was a bad lead? Don't be silly, it just means that the "right" lead doesn't always work. It's another reason to bid boldly; even when they can beat you, it doesn't mean they will, or even should.

