

**Board 3**

South Deals  
E-W Vul

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

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

**Auction Commentary:** When South rebids 2♥, North's hand increases in value. While they would have passed a 2♠ rebid, they should invite South to game over 2♥. South has an excellent hand to accept the game try.

**Opening Lead:** ♣Q. It is often right to lead trumps when they find a fit in opener's second suit. No argument from me if you chose one here.

**Play Commentary:** When you have a long side-suit opposite a singleton in the dummy, you should definitely be thinking about NOT drawing trump immediately. You can ruff your small cards in the dummy, and some times you will want to try and score all of your trumps via a cross-ruff. Win the opening lead, cash the ♠A and ruff a spade. Ruff a club back to hand and ruff another spade. If all is still going well, play a diamond to the ♦A and ruff your 4th spade. Ruff a club back to hand, and ruff your last spade in the dummy. The defenders can do nothing but watch as travel back and forth scooping tricks. You will finish with 11 tricks, taking 3 aces and all 8 of your trumps!

If the defenders lead a trump, you will still come to 10 tricks. You still have 3 Aces and your 4 trumps, but now you can score only 3 spade ruffs in the dummy. A nice lead, but not nice enough to defeat you.

**Takeaway:** Remember to upgrade your hand during the auction when circumstances change. Your modest 8-counts can increase in value to at least 11 when partner shows a second suit if you have 4-card support. Keep making your plans when dummy comes down, not after you've thoughtlessly begun drawing trump. Consider leading trumps when the opponents settle in a second suit; it usually means they will want to ruff the first suit in the dummy.

**Board 8**

West Deals  
None Vul

	♠ Q J 8		
	♥ 3 2		
	♦ 10 4 3 2		
	♣ K J 10 9		
♠ 9 2	<div style="display: inline-block; background-color: green; color: white; padding: 5px; text-align: center;">N W     E S</div>	♠ A K 7 5 4 3	
♥ K Q J 6 5 4		♥ 10 9 8	
♦ Q		♦ A 7 5	
♣ 8 6 5 2		♣ A	
	♠ 10 6		
	♥ A 7		
	♦ K J 9 8 6		
	♣ Q 7 4 3		
<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
2 ♥	Pass	4 ♥	All pass

**Auction Commentary:** When partner opens 2 of a major, we can use the Rule of 17 as a guideline to help us decide whether to bid game or not. Add your HCP and the number of trumps you hold. If you have 17 or more, bid game. In this case, you have 18, and excellent shape, more than enough to bid a game.

**Opening Lead:** ♣ J or ♠ Q. Either of these could work. The ♣ J is the top of an interior sequence. We lead ♣ J from ♣ JT(9) and from ♣ KJT(9). Similarly, with QT9x, we lead the T.

**Play Commentary.** Thank You Partner! We have to deal with our little clubs. We could try and set up the lovely spade suit for discards, but if that suit is splitting 4-1 it could be a problem. Better is to try and ruff the clubs. Win the ♣ A on opening lead, or cash it at trick 2 if they led a spade, and play ♦ A and ruff a diamond. Ruff a club and ruff the last diamond. Ruff another club. Now, we cash the two high spades and play a third spade. If South discards, we ruff and ruff our last club. If they ruff low, we overruff, and ruff the last club. If they ruff with the Ace, we discard the last club. Making six, one way, or the other, or the other. Nicely done.

**Takeaway:** Always be on the lookout for situations where you want to delay pulling trumps until you have used them for ruffing your losers.

**Board 10**  
 East Deals  
 Both Vul

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

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
1 ♠	Pass	1 ♥	Pass
		2 ♦	All pass

**Auction Commentary:** West has 4-card support for diamonds, but still not enough to raise partner in the minor. They could compete to the three-level if the opponents balance.

**Opening Lead:** You have a good sequence in clubs and two top touching spades, but you should lead a trump without a second thought! When they come to rest, at a low level, in opener's second suit, and you are strong in opener's first suit, a trump lead is very nearly mandatory. Opener will definitely want to ruff losers in his first suit in the dummy. Do what you can to prevent it.

North has the ♦ A, so they can continue the assault on dummy's ruffing power by playing a second diamond. Do not think about alternatives when partner leads a trump here; they are directing the defense. They are saying, "Partner, I am strong in opener's first suit. Help me stop them from ruffing their losers!" Don't leave partner hanging.

**Play Commentary:** We started with two top hearts and two top clubs. We want to ruff as many hearts as we can in the dummy. If they started with two rounds of trumps, we can still ruff two hearts and make our contract. If they didn't start with trumps, we can make an overtrick.

**Takeaway:** Listen to the auction. Resist the urge to make "automatic" leads until you have considered whether or not some other lead (like a trump) is called for. When you know from the auction that declarer will want to ruff losers, lead trumps!