

# Eddie Kantar Bridge [kantarbridge.com](http://kantarbridge.com)

## Board 1

♠ A J 10 8 7 5  
 North Deals ♥ A 4  
 None Vul ♦ 7 6 4  
 ♣ A 4

♠ 6 3  
 ♥ 9 8 7 5  
 ♦ K 9 2  
 ♣ J 9 8 3



♠ K Q 9 2  
 ♥ 10 6  
 ♦ A Q J 10 3  
 ♣ 10 2

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

West	North	East	South
<i>Walter</i>	<i>Nancy</i>	<i>Edward</i>	<i>Sarah</i>
	1 ♠	2 ♦	2 ♥
3 ♦	Pass	Pass	4 ♣
Pass	4 ♥	All pass	

4 ♥ by South

Trick	Lead	2nd	3rd	4th
1. W	♦ 2	4	<u>A</u>	5
2. E	♦ <u>Q</u>	8	9	6
3. E	♦ J	♥ <u>2</u>	K	7
4. S	♣ 5	3	<u>A</u>	2
5. N	♣ 4	10	<u>K</u>	8
6. S	♣ 6	9	♥ <u>A</u>	♠ 9
7. N	♥ 4	6	<u>K</u>	5
8. S	♥ <u>Q</u>	7	♠ 5	10
9. S	♥ <u>J</u>	8	♠ 7	♦ 3
10. S	♣ <u>Q</u>	J	♠ 8	♦ 10

Made 4 — NS +420

## Two Suiter

North's pass to 3 ♦ shows a minimum opening and denies three card heart support.

West must have raised on his good looks. In any case you have to bring in the clubs and still keep control of the hand. Best is to play the ace-king of clubs and ruff a low club with the ♥ A. Next, return to your hand with a trump and play the ♥ KQJ. If hearts divide 3-3, you have the rest. If hearts are 4-2, play winning clubs and the most you can lose is two diamonds and heart. Yes, if clubs are 3-3 and hearts 4-2, you lose an overtrick, but this is IMPs and making the contract is far more important than risking your contract for an overtrick. (If you draw four rounds of trump before touching clubs, in effect playing the hand at notrump, down you go).

The Bottom Line: Ruffing a loser high when dummy has honor doubleton in trump, is a good way of unblocking the trump suit not to mention avoiding a possible overruff.

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**Board 2** ♠ K J 8 6  
 East Deals ♥ Q 3 2  
 N-S Vul ♦ 10 4  
 ♣ 10 7 5 2

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



♠ 10 4  
 ♥ 9 6  
 ♦ 9 7 3  
 ♣ A K Q 6 4 3

West	North	East	South
<i>Walter</i>	<i>Nancy</i>	<i>Edward</i>	<i>Sarah</i>
		1 ♠	2 ♣
2 ♦	Pass	2 ♠	Pass
3 ♥	Pass	4 ♦	Pass
4 ♥	Pass	5 ♥	Pass
6 ♥	All pass		

6 ♥ by West

Trick	Lead	2nd	3rd	4th
1. N	♣ 2 ↓	8	A	♥ 5
2. W	♥ 7	2	A ↓	6
3. E	♥ 4	9	K	3
4. W	♦ 2	4	K	3
5. E	♦ 6	7	A	10
6. W	♦ Q	♣ 5	♠ 2	9
7. W	♦ J	♣ 7	♠ 3	♣ 3
8. W	♦ 8	♠ 6	♠ 5	♣ 4

Made 6 — EW +980

## The Right Cards

(2 ♠) Not the kind of suit you like to rebid, but there's has no second choice.

(4 ♦) A heart raise at this point (direct raise of a second suit) shows 4 ♥ with a likely 6 ♠.

(5 ♥) Looks like the right hand (fitting honors in partner's long suits), facing 11 red cards.

You have a ♠ loser and a possible ♥ loser, however your ♠ loser can be ruffed in dummy! All you need is a 3-2 trump break. Ruff the opening lead, play the ♥ AK, and assuming no queen has appeared and the suit divided 3-2, start playing ♦'s discarding ♠'s from dummy. Whether an opponent trumps in or not, you can discard 4 ♠'s from dummy & eventually ruff your ♠ Q in dummy.

The Bottom Line: With high honors in partner's long suits bid aggressively. Finesses in the trump suit can be an optical illusion when a trump is needed in dummy to ruff a loser in dummy's long suit! Of course this presupposes that you can rid dummy of enough cards in that long suit on your own long side suit.

When partner leads a suit in which you have the AKQ and dummy has length in the suit, take the first trick with the ace, not the queen. If declarer ruffs, partner will know you have the AKQ. If the Ace lives, continue with the queen. If declarer ruffs, partner will know you started with the AKQ. By playing the ace first, you do not give away the strength of your suit. The original play of the queen (which shows the AKQ unless partner has underled the ace!) makes it easier for the declarer to place the other missing honor cards.

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## Board 3

♠ A 8 6  
 South Deals ♥ K 10 7 5 3  
 E-W Vul ♦ 8 6  
 ♣ A J 5

♠ J 5 2  
 ♥ J 8 4 2  
 ♦ Q J 10  
 ♣ 8 6 4



♠ Q 7 4 3  
 ♥ Q 6  
 ♦ 9 7 5 3  
 ♣ 10 7 3

♠ K 10 9  
 ♥ A 9  
 ♦ A K 4 2  
 ♣ K Q 9 2

West	North	East	South
<i>Walter</i>	<i>Nancy</i>	<i>Edward</i>	<i>Sarah</i>

			1 ♦
Pass	1 ♥	Pass	2 NT
Pass	4 NT	Pass	5 ♣
Pass	5 NT	Pass	6 NT

All pass

6 NT by South

Trick	Lead	2nd	3rd	4th
1. W	♦ Q	6	7	<u>A</u>
2. S	♣ 2	4	<u>J</u>	3
3. N	♥ 3	6	9	<u>J</u>
4. W	♦ J	8	3	<u>K</u>
5. S	♥ <u>A</u>	2	5	Q

Made 6 — NS +990

## Stretching

(4 NT) A real stretch given that you show 18-19.

(5 ♣) Acceptance showing four clubs in case partner also has four clubs.

(5 NT) Not forcing. Showing a minimum slam try; no kidding.

(6 NT) I'm not letting you off the hook.

♦ Q In spite of your opening 1 ♦ bid, they lead your suit.

With eight top tricks outside of hearts, the suit you must develop, you need to play hearts to your best advantage for FOUR TRICKS.

The best play with this combination is to lead low from dummy and insert the 9. You score four heart tricks anytime the suit breaks 3-3 or East has Jx, Qx, or QJxx; not a bad parlay.

The Bottom Line: After partner makes an invitational raise to 4 NT, a new suit by the opener is natural, it is not some sort of response to a non-existent Blackwood bid.

At notrump (or suit), count your sure tricks outside of the suit you must develop so you will know how many tricks you need in your main suit.

With K10xxx facing A9 doubleton the best play for four tricks is to lead low to the nine. Similarly, with A10xxx facing K9 doubleton the best play for four tricks is to lead low to the nine.

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## Board 4

♠ A 6  
West Deals ♥ A K 7  
Both Vul ♦ J 8 3 2  
♣ A 8 7 5

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



♠ J 10 8  
♥ Q 8 2  
♦ 5 4  
♣ J 9 4 3 2

16  
9 4  
11

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

West	North	East	South
<i>Sarah</i>	<i>Walter</i>	<i>Nancy</i>	<i>Edward</i>
Pass	1 NT	Pass	3 NT

All pass

3 NT by North

Trick	Lead	2nd	3rd	4th
1. E	♠ J	2	3	<u>A</u>
2. N	♦ 8	4	6	<u>K</u>

Made 3 — NS +600

## A Gimme

This hand is supposed to be a "confidence builder". In order to get an "A" all you have to do is play low from dummy and preserve the queen as a stopper in case South gets the lead. Since the diamond finesse is going into South, that seems to be a clever idea.

After the winning the ♠ A, run the ♦ 8 (or the ♦ J). As it happens it loses, but South cannot attack spades without surrendering a trick to dummy's queen. In the meantime, you now have nine tricks: four diamonds, two hearts, two clubs and one spade. Playing the ♠ Q at trick one is an optical illusion. If North has led from the king, you can always take a second spade trick later and if South has the king, your now guarded queen protects you from a further spade attack.

The Bottom Line: Defensively, when the bidding goes 1 NT pass 3 NT, it is healthier to lead a major suit as opposed to a minor. If dummy had one or two four card majors, 2 ♣ would have been the original response. In the absence of a 2 ♣ response, expect minor suit length to hit the table.

When the opponents lead a jack against your notrump contract, find out if they are using the lead convention "jack denies". If they are, the jack is the opening leader's highest card and there is not much point in playing the queen from dummy.

With Ax facing Qxx in the dummy, it is usually right to win the opening lead with the ace, particularly if you plan to take a finesse into your right hand opponent. However, if you absolutely need two quick tricks in the suit, play the queen.

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**Board 5** ♠ 10 9 2

North Deals ♥ Q J 2

N-S Vul ♦ 7

♣ 10 9 7 6 3 2

♠ A 6 5

♥ A 8 7 6 5

♦ A K 8

♣ 5 4



♠ 3

♥ K 4 3

♦ Q J 10 9 6 5 4

♣ K J

♠ K Q J 8 7 4

♥ 10 9

♦ 3 2

♣ A Q 8

3  
15 10  
12

West

North

East

South

Sarah

Walter

Nancy

Edward

Pass

3 ♦

3 ♠

5 ♦ All pass

5 ♦ by East

Trick	Lead	2nd	3rd	4th
1. S	♠ K	5	2	3
2. S	♠ Q ↓	6	9	♦ 9
3. E	♦ 5	2	♠ K	7
4. W	♦ A	♣ 2	J	3
5. W	♠ A	10	♥ 3	7
6. W	♥ 5	J	♠ K	9
7. E	♥ 4	10	♠ A	2
8. W	♥ 6	Q	♦ Q	♠ 8
9. E	♦ 4	♠ J	8	-

Made 5 — EW +400

## Wrong Game

Well, you 'successfully' avoided 4 ♥ and 3 NT (from your side) to land in 5 ♦. Things could be worse as 5 ♦ is certainly playable. How would you play it?

The best way to handle this situation is to duck the opening lead!

In effect you are exchanging a spade loser for a heart loser. If a spade is continued, ruff, draw two rounds of trumps ending in dummy, discard a heart on the ♠ A and play the ♥ AK and ruff a heart. If hearts are 3-2, you can discard both clubs on the established hearts and make an overtrick. The only way South can save the overtrick is to cash the ♣ A at trick two - an unlikely play to say the least.

The Bottom Line: Exchanging one loser for another can be a neat form of an avoidance play.

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**Board 6** ♠ 9 8 4 3  
 East Deals ♥ A 3  
 E-W Vul ♦ K J 6  
 ♣ K J 9 4

♠ 10 6 5  
 ♥ J 8 6 4  
 ♦ A 2  
 ♣ 10 8 7 5



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

12 ♠ A K Q 2  
 5 8 ♥ Q 9 2  
 15 ♦ 10 8 7  
 ♣ A 6 3

West	North	East	South
<i>Walter</i>	<i>Nancy</i>	<i>Edward</i>	<i>Sarah</i>
		Pass	1 NT
Pass	2 ♣	Pass	2 ♠
Pass	4 ♠	All pass	

4 ♠ by South

Trick	Lead	2nd	3rd	4th
1. W	♦ A	6	9	7
2. W	♦ 2	<u>K</u>	3	8
3. N	♠ 3	7	<u>A</u>	5
4. S	♠ <u>K</u>	6	4	J
5. S	♠ <u>Q</u>	10	8	♦ 4
6. S	♦ 10 ↓	♥ 4	J	<u>Q</u>

Made 4 — NS +420

If it has an Odour

Opening lead: ♦ A

East plays the ♦ 9 and West continues with the ♦ 2. Plan the play.

Solution:

If a lead looks like a doubleton and smells like a doubleton, it probably is a doubleton. Why would anyone lead from an AQ into a notrump bidder? Win the ♦ K and assuming a 3-2 trump division, draw trump and exit with the ♦ J. Note: When the adverse trumps are 4-1, a long suit is usually led.

East, on play with the ♦ Q has an unhappy choice of plays. If East elects to exit a heart, play the queen and if it is covered, you are reduced to the club finesse. If East exits a club, the most you can lose is a heart. If East exits a diamond, ruff in your hand and discard a heart from dummy. You now have to play clubs for one loser. The best play is low to the king, low to the ace and then low to the jack if the queen hasn't appeared.

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## Board 7

♠ A 4 3  
 South Deals ♥ A K Q J 10 9 5 2  
 Both Vul ♦ —  
 ♣ A K

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

N  
W E  
S

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

21  
 5 5  
 9

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

West	North	East	South
<i>Edward</i>	<i>Sarah</i>	<i>Walter</i>	<i>Nancy</i>
Pass	2 ♣	Pass	2 ♦
Pass	2 ♥	Pass	2 NT
Pass	3 ♥	Pass	4 ♦
Pass	4 ♠	Pass	5 ♦
Pass	6 ♥	All pass	

6 ♥ by North

Trick	Lead	2nd	3rd	4th
1. E	♣ Q ↓	3	6	<u>A</u>
2. N	♥ 2	<u>8</u>	6	4
3. E	♣ J	4	7	<u>K</u>
4. N	♥ 5	3	<u>7</u>	♦ 3
5. S	♦ A	5	♠ 3	6
6. S	♦ K	8	♠ 4	7
7. S	♣ 5	8	<u>♥ 9</u>	2

Made 6 — NS +1430

Once in a Lifetime - Don't Blow it.

Opening lead: ♣ Q

During the bidding you discover that partner has the ♦ AK, but how are you going to get over there to use them? After the opening lead, you have the same problem.

Solution:

With two possible spade losers staring you in the face, the safest way to dummy's ♦ AK is to lead a low heart to the six at trick two!

This has the effect of forcing a dummy entry with the ♥ 7. That's all there is to it.

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## Board 8

♠ 9 8 7  
 West Deals ♥ K Q 8 2  
 None Vul ♦ 8 7 6  
 ♣ Q 10 8

♠ K 6 3 2  
 ♥ A 10  
 ♦ A Q 10  
 ♣ A 9 3 2



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

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

West	North	East	South
<i>Walter</i>	<i>Nancy</i>	<i>Edward</i>	<i>Sarah</i>
1 NT	Pass	2 ♣	Pass
2 ♠	Pass	3 ♠	Pass
4 ♠	All pass		

4 ♠ by West

Trick	Lead	2nd	3rd	4th
1. N	♥ K	3	5	<u>A</u>
2. W	♣ 2	8	4	<u>J</u>
3. S	♥ <u>J</u>	10	2	4
4. S	♣ K	<u>A</u>	10	5
5. W	♠ <u>K</u>	7	4	J
6. W	♠ 2	8	<u>A</u>	Q

Made 4 — EW +420

## Up or Down, Mr Brown?

Opening lead: ♥ K

Say you win the ♥ A and duck a club to South's ♣ J. South cashes the ♥ J and exits with the ♣ K, to your ace, North playing the ten. Wondering about spades?

OK, the time has come; you play the ♠ K and south plays the ♠ J. When you continue with a second spade, North plays low, of course. Which spade do you play from dummy, and worse, why?

### Solution:

This one's a gimme. You can't make the hand if the ♠ J is a singleton as you will have a natural spade loser to go along with a heart and two club losers. The only hope to make your contract is that East has ♠ QJ doubleton so rise with the ace. Play to make!

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**Board 9** ♠ A K J 10 8  
 North Deals ♥ A K  
 E-W Vul ♦ A K Q J 5  
 ♣ 9

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



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

25 ♠ 5 4 3 2  
 5 9 ♥ —  
 1 ♦ 7 6 3 2  
 ♣ J 8 6 4 3

West	North	East	South
<i>Walter</i>	<i>Nancy</i>	<i>Edward</i>	<i>Sarah</i>
	2 ♣	2 ♥	Pass
4 ♥	4 ♠	5 ♣	5 ♠
6 ♥	6 ♠	Pass	Pass
Dbl	All pass		

6 ♠× by North

Trick	Lead	2nd	3rd	4th
1. E	♣ A	3	K	9
2. E	♥ Q	♠ 2	2	K
3. S	♠ 3	6	10	♣ 2
4. N	♥ A	4	♠ 5	7
5. S	♠ 4	7	J	-

Made 6 — NS +1210

## Wild Man, Wild

Opening lead: ♣ A

West plays the ♣ K and East shifts to the ♥ Q.

### The Solution

East and West have badly misjudged the situation. They have a great save in 7 ♥.

In addition, declarer has been tipped off the location of the ♠ Q.

Your play is to ruff the heart continuation at trick two using **both** of your high hearts as dummy entries to take two spade finesses as East figures to be void in spades.

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**Board 10** ♠ K 9 7 5  
 East Deals ♥ 2  
 Both Vul ♦ Q 10 7 2  
 ♣ 9 8 7 6

♠ 10 6 4  
 ♥ K 7 6 5  
 ♦ A 5 4  
 ♣ 5 4 3



♠ A Q J 8 3 2  
 ♥ A Q  
 ♦ K 3  
 ♣ K Q J

♠ —  
 ♥ J 10 9 8 4 3  
 ♦ J 9 8 6  
 ♣ A 10 2

West	North	East	South
<i>Edward</i>	<i>Sarah</i>	<i>Walter</i>	<i>Nancy</i>
		2 ♣	Pass
2 ♦	Pass	2 ♠	Pass
3 ♠	Pass	4 ♣	Pass
4 ♦	Pass	4 ♥	Pass
5 ♥	Pass	6 ♠	All pass

6 ♠ by East

Trick	Lead	2nd	3rd	4th
1. S	♥ J	♠ K	2	Q
2. W	♠ 10	K	♠ A	♥ 3
3. E	♦ 3	6	♠ A	2
4. W	♠ 6	7	♠ 8	♥ 8
5. E	♠ Q	♣ 10	4	5
6. E	♠ J	♦ 8	♦ 4	9
7. E	♣ K	♠ A	3	6

Made 6 — EW +1430

## Key Card Blackwood Anyone?

The opening lead is the ♥ J.

### Solution:

You are off the ♣ A and need to find the ♠ K with North, so assume it is there. First hurdle.

Next, you must allow for North having all four spades in which case you need to lead spades TWICE from dummy to pull in the suit.

Make the key play of the ♥ K at trick one and the next key play of the ♠ 10 at trick two. If North plays low, run the ten, and repeat the finesse. If South has shown out on the first spade, you can return to dummy with the ♦ A to finesse spades one last time.

There are two traps here:

- (1) winning the opening lead in your own hand. Now you may need two dummy entries to pull in the spades and if North has a singleton heart, you don't have them;
- (2) even if you win the ♥ K at trick one, you must start with the ♠ 10 at trick two. If you lead low to the queen and East shows out, you will need TWO more dummy entries to pick up the spades and you only have one.

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**Board 11** ♠ 5 4  
 South Deals ♥ A K J 10  
 None Vul ♦ 10 9 8 7  
 ♣ A Q 5

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

14 ♠ A 8  
 8 3 ♥ 6 3 2  
 15 ♦ A K J 5  
 ♣ K 7 3 2

West North East South  
*Walter Nancy Edward Sarah*  
 1 NT

Pass 3 NT All pass

3 NT by South

Trick	Lead	2nd	3rd	4th
1. W	♠ K	4	2	<u>A</u>
2. S	♥ 2	4	<u>A</u>	5
3. N	♣ <u>A</u>	8	2	4
4. N	♣ <u>Q</u>	10	3	6
5. N	♣ 5	♠ 3	<u>K</u>	9
6. S	♦ <u>A</u>	4	7	2
7. S	♦ <u>K</u>	Q	8	3

Made 4 — NS +430

**Where there is eight, there must be nine**

Opening lead: ♠ K

The third hand signals with the 9 and you decide to win the opening lead.

Solution:

You have 8 top tricks with a chance for a 9th in three suits. In addition, you dare not give up the lead. First start with clubs. If that suit divides 3-3, your worries are over. Life is never that easy. If clubs are 4-2 you have to bring home one of the red suits. But which one?

When you have two suits missing a queen and can't afford to give up the lead, play the AK of the longer suit (diamonds) and if the queen doesn't drop take a finesse in the shorter suit (hearts). After the clubs cash the ♥ A, in case the queen is singleton, and if it isn't (I'm not that nice a guy), play the ♦ AK and if the queen doesn't drop, take the heart finesse. Your play is rewarded, the ♦ Q falls doubleton so you need not risk the heart finesse.

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**Board 12** ♠ 7  
 West Deals ♥ Q 9 8  
 N-S Vul ♦ Q 10 8 7  
 ♣ 10 9 8 5 2

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

♠ Q 3  
 ♥ 7 6 5 4  
 ♦ 6 5 4  
 ♣ Q 7 6 3

West	North	East	South
<i>Walter</i>	<i>Nancy</i>	<i>Edward</i>	<i>Sarah</i>
2 NT	Pass	3 ♥	Pass
4 ♠	Pass	6 ♠	All pass

6 ♠ by West

Trick	Lead	2nd	3rd	4th
1. N	♣ 10	4	7	<u>A</u>
2. W	♠ A	7	2	3
3. W	♠ K	♣ 5	4	Q
4. W	♣ J	8	<u>K</u>	3
5. E	♦ A	4	9	7
6. E	♦ 2	5	<u>K</u>	8
7. W	♦ J	<u>Q</u>	3	6

Made 6 — EW +980

## Such a Beautiful Slam

(2 NT) This hand screams for a 2 NT opening bid.

(3 ♥) Transfer.

(4 ♠) Four spades (usually).

Opening lead: ♣ 10

Third hand plays the ♣ 7 at trick one which you win with the ace. At trick two you play the ♠ A, both following. How do you continue?

### Solution:

After drawing the last trump, the idea is to hold your red suit losers to one and you have a 100% play. Cash a second club, stripping that suit, and exit with the AK and J of diamonds. Whoever wins must lead a heart or give you a ruff and a sluff.

Don't even think of taking two finesses when you can ensure the contract without taking either.

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**Board 13** ♠ K 9 7 5 3  
 East Deals ♥ 10 9 7 4  
 Both Vul ♦ —  
 ♣ K Q 9 2

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



♠ A 6  
 ♥ J 6 5  
 ♦ Q 8 3 2  
 ♣ J 7 6 5

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

West	North	East	South
Nancy	Walter	Edward	Sarah
		Pass	Pass
1 ♦	Pass	1 N	Pass
3 N	All pass		

3 NT by East

Trick	Lead	2nd	3rd	4th
1. S	♠ J	2	3	<u>A</u>
2. E	♦ 8	4	6	♥ 4
3. E	♦ Q	5	9	♥ 7 ↓
4. E	♦ 2	7	<u>10</u>	♥ 9
5. W	♦ A	♥ 10	3	K
6. W	♦ J	♣ 9	♣ 5	♣ 3

Made 3 — EW +600

## A Gimme:

This deal is based on an earlier one, with a slight variation.

Play low from dummy and preserve the queen as a stopper in case North gets the lead. Since the diamond finesse is going into North, that seems to be a clever idea.

After the winning the ♠ A

Option 1: run the ♦ 8, and play the ♦ 6 from dummy, so that you are well placed to repeat the finesse.

Option 2: start with the ♦ Q and remember to play the ♦ 9 from dummy!

As it happens North shows out on the first round of the suit.

Let's say you took option 1. Now lead the ♦ Q to repeat the finesse. If south plays low again, you are still in your hand (East) to repeat the finesse a third time.

You now have nine tricks: five diamonds, two hearts, one clubs and one spade. Playing the ♠ Q at trick one is an optical illusion. If East has led from the king, you can always take a second spade trick later and if West has the king, your now guarded queen protects you from a further spade attack.

When the opponents lead a jack against your notrump contract, find out if they are using the lead convention "jack denies". If they are, the jack is the opening leader's highest

card and there is not much point in playing the queen from dummy.

With Ax facing Qxx in the dummy, it is usually right to win the opening lead with the ace, particularly if you plan to take a finesse into your right hand opponent. However, if you absolutely need two quick tricks in the suit, play the queen.