

vulnerable.

♠ AJ3 ♥ 85 ♦ AJ98752 ♣ 6	<table border="1" style="border-collapse: collapse; width: 40px; height: 40px; margin: auto;"> <tr><td></td><td style="text-align: center;">N</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">W</td><td></td><td style="text-align: center;">E</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td style="text-align: center;">S</td><td></td></tr> </table>		N		W		E		S		♠ KQ62 ♥ A109 ♦ KQ ♣ AK97
	N										
W		E									
	S										

Let's bid the hands. East, a balanced hand with 21 points opens 2NT. West has two magical aces and a seven card suit and knows East has at least two diamonds. If East has  $\diamond K$ , West can count seven diamond tricks plus  $\spadesuit A$ , so West thinks slam is certain.

West best jumps to  $4\diamond$ . By going past 3NT West tells East, they may make at least  $6\diamond$ . Why is this so? Playing in 5-of-a-minor, is asking for a bottom score as all the 3NT contracts will out-score it. Bidding 4-of-a-minor, says "let's try to bid a slam partner".

What does East do over  $4\diamond$ ? That's easy. East counts how many tricks will be won if partner has six diamonds and the missing two aces. Tricks =  $3\spadesuit$  or  $4\spadesuit + 1\heartsuit + 6\diamond + 2\clubsuit = 12$  or 13 tricks. East's  $\diamond K$  and  $\diamond Q$  are "real" diamonds, West is keen on slam and East has two high honours in West's long suit, wow.

This is the time to ask for aces (bid  $4NT^1$ ), as East knows what to bid over West's response. If West shows one ace, East will bid 6NT ( $6\diamond$  is possible but does not score as well). If West shows two aces, East can count 13 tricks and bids 7NT. As East has the  $\diamond KQ$ , West will have extra diamond length or extra strength outside of diamonds, otherwise how could West be saying "I think we can make a slam by jumping to  $4\diamond$ "?

An overly cautious East after West shows two aces, bids 5NT saying "we have all the aces, if you have an extra trick bid seven". Now West with seven diamonds knows that's an extra trick so bids  $7\diamond$  which East will correct to 7NT. Remember a bid of 5NT, says we may make seven, what do you think partner?

On actual hand EW have 14 top tricks ( $4\spadesuit + 1\heartsuit + 7\diamond + 2\clubsuit$ ) = 14, East can claim their 7NT contract as soon as they see dummy after counting their tricks. Yet again, bridge is about tricks.

<sup>1</sup> Better system is for 4NT to be Keycard Blackwood on diamonds.