

East deals, nil

vulnerable.

West holds: ♠ AQ963
 ♥ KQ1098
 ♦ 9
 ♣ 42

<u>West</u>	<u>North</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>South</u>
-	-	1♦	pass
1♠	pass	1NT	pass
4♥	all pass		

After East opens, West has opening strength so will ensure game is bid. With 5-5 in the majors, West bids spades first. East shows a balanced hand of 12-14 points with 1NT, West jumps to 4♥ asking East to choose between playing 4♥ or 4♠. East prefers hearts, so passes 4♥.

♠ AQ963 ♥ KQ1098 ♦ 9 ♣ 42	<div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 40px; height: 40px; display: flex; flex-direction: column; align-items: center; justify-content: center; margin: 0 auto;"> <div style="margin-bottom: 5px;">N</div> <div style="margin-bottom: 5px;">W E</div> <div style="margin-top: 5px;">S</div> </div>	♠ 108 ♥ J54 ♦ K763 ♣ AKJ6
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North leads ♣10. West's plan to make 4♥?

West has a heart and diamond to lose, the key is to establish West's spade side suit. If West loses at most one spade they will succeed. Look closely at the spades, the ♠108 are "big" spades.

How shall West play spades? By finessing. If South has at least one of ♠J or ♠K, West is a very good chance to make 4♥.

West wins ♣A. West must play a spade now, to start establishing the key side suit, and carefully leads ♠10.

If South covers ♠10 with ♠J or ♠K, West's troubles are over, West covers their honour. But if South plays low on ♠10? Yes, West also plays low, finessing. Whatever happens, West plans to return to East with ♣K and lead ♠8, finessing ♠9 if South plays low.

As long as South has either of ♠J or ♠K West will make 4♥.

Importantly West needs to start playing spades before playing trumps.

What happens on the lead of ♠10 at Trick 2?

South plays low, West plays low and ♠10 wins! Great, now West knows South has both ♠J and ♠K and continues with ♠8, planning to

cover South's card. When South plays low, West carefully plays ♠9 which wins. As North followed low on ♠9, West knows the two outstanding spades (♠KJ) are with South.

This is now the position, West declaring 4♥:

♠ AQ6	N W E S	♠ -
♥ KQ1098		♥ J54
♦ 9		♦ K763
♣ 4		♣ KJ6

North has no more spades but that is fine as West still has all East's trumps to use. West leads ♠6 (not ♠A), the best North can do is to discard, West ruffs ♠6 with ♥4 and leads the ♥5 (keep ♥J in East).

West is only now drawing trumps, after they setup their spade side suit as winners. After drawing trumps West plays ♠A (♠K falls) and the ♠Q wins. Making 11 tricks, well done.

The NS hands were:

North: ♠72 ♥A72 ♦AQ54 ♣Q1098 South: ♠KJ54 ♥63 ♦J1082 ♣753

Club Results: No West with 5-5 in the majors, bid or played in the recommended way, now there's an opportunity for our club Wests to do better. Some misguided Norths thought it was a good idea to lead spades into West's known long suit, these Norths played the hand perfectly for West, removing all the challenge.

Summary:

When you need to establish a side suit in a trump contract, plan ahead. On this hand West needed to lead spades twice from East for finesses, and later needed to have trumps in dummy to ruff the third round of spades. Challenging but do-able.