

vulnerable.

Instructive in bidding and play. South deals and opens a weak 2♥, West passes, North holds:

♠ J9532
 ♥ KJ3
 ♦ K4
 ♣ A65

Does North bid? My advice on responding to a weak two: "Your trump fit is critical not your points. The single raise is made with three card trump support and 8 to 12 points. A hand that is not strong enough to invite game, but with a combined nine trumps increases the pre-empt to the three level. Importantly, Responder raises at their first chance to bid. Do not pass, planning to raise later. The weak two opener passes the raise." Given North has three trumps, they must not pass. North is maximum for a 3♥ raise, with any more they could make a try for 4♥.

Club Results: In our club game only two Norths bid immediately, Alison raised to 3♥ and Moira tried 4♥. Well done Alison and Moira. On the hand EW have no trouble making 5♣, however the most common result was a part-score in clubs making 11 tricks.

After Alison raised to 3♥, East made a takeout double and West unwisely passed:

♠ J9532
 ♥ KJ3
 ♦ K4
 ♣ A65

	N	
W		E
	S	

♠ 76
 ♥ AQ7654
 ♦ 8732
 ♣ 7

West leads ♣3, if South can make 3♥x, it will be a top.

In a suit contract South counts and plans to reduce their losers.

1st Step: Losers from South, 2♠s+4♦s = 6

2nd Step: Reduce losers by? Lead up to ♦K and then hope to ruff two ♦s in North. If West has ♦A, you may make 10 tricks.

3rd Step: Your plan. As you need to ruff ♦s, do not play trumps.

Trick 1: ♣3, ♣A, ♣2, ♣7. Win ♣A, cross to South to play a ♦ up to ♦K.

Trick 2: ♣6, ♣Q, ♥4, ♣4. Ruff ♣6 to hand, must not play trumps.

Trick 3: Lead ♦2, ♦5, ♦K, ♦A. East wins ♦K with ♦A.

Trick 4: ♦Q, ♦3, ♦10, ♦4. If East leads ♥s, South will be defeated but all club Easts continued with ♦Q.

East now leads ♠K, ♠Q and then ♠5, South knows West has ♠A and ruffs with ♥5 as West follows with ♠A. The hands are now:

♠ J9
♥ KJ3
♦ -
♣ 5

	N	
W		E
	S	

♠ -
♥ AQ76
♦ 87
♣ -

Take stock. If South ruffs ♦7, ruffs ♣5, ruffs ♦8, they can cash ♥K but cannot get back to hand to draw trumps. If South tries to ruff ♠9, West will make a trump trick. But there is no need to ruff cards as North's ♠J9 are high. South draws trumps ending in North and discards their ♦87 on ♠J9. Our club Souths love ruffing and didn't realise North's ♠J9 were high.

Tricks 8 to 10: Draw trumps ending in North. West had three trumps.

Tricks 11 and 12: Cash winning ♠J9 discarding ♦76.

Trick 13: South has a trump and wins 9 tricks, scoring 730 points.

Club Results: The Souths lost their way. All bar two drew trumps in three rounds and had no chance. Two Souths played well until Trick 7 (as above) but failed to realise their ♠J9 were high, they were fixated on ruffing diamonds in North (as they had originally planned).

The EW hands were:

West: ♠A104 ♥1092 ♦J105 ♣K1043

East: ♠KQ5 ♥8 ♦AQ96 ♣QJ982

Summary:

If partner opens a weak two, with three trumps and a scattering of points, raise partner immediately. No creeping. As declarer, keep alert, sometimes a Plan B comes good, like North's ♠J9 becoming winners, so now switch to drawing trumps and cash ♠J9.