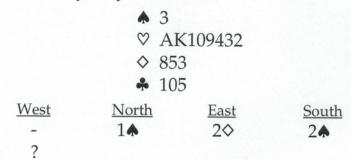
vulnerable.

This hand was a mystery for most Wests:



West's bid? Only one bid comes to my mind. Think tricks, give East five strong diamonds then West needs little luck to win 10 tricks if hearts are trumps, $7\heartsuit + 3\diamondsuit = 10$ tricks. And East is likely to have some strength outside of diamonds for their $2\diamondsuit$ bid. Bid $4\heartsuit$. West must bid $4\heartsuit$ now.

At the club not one West jumped to 4% over $2\clubsuit$. Some Wests passed! Were these West's still counting points? Not tricks? Some Wests bid 3% allowing North to bid $3\spadesuit$, thereafter no West was allowed to declare 4%. A big opportunity missed by our club Wests.

♦ 3		♦ 8752
♥ AK109432	N	♡ O
♦ 853	W E	♦ AQJ109
4 105	5	♣ K87

West declares 4%, North leads A then K that West ruffs. The %2 to dummy's %Q, ruff A7 allows West to draw trumps with %A and %K. The A3 finessing A0, unluckily loses to A4. NS now need to cash A4 to hold West to 10 tricks. A touch of luck, but A4 bid and made are the opportunities you, the "winning bridge player", need to create then take.

If NS bid $4 \spadesuit$ over $4 \heartsuit$, East doubles. North needs to play well to avoid being defeated by two tricks. If West jumps to $4 \heartsuit$ over $2 \spadesuit$, as recommended, it's most difficult for North to push onto $4 \spadesuit$ and West is likely to win the contract in $4 \heartsuit$.

Summary:

Hands with long suits have to the potential to win many tricks. Use partner's bidding to count how many tricks you may win with just a little luck. Then do it, bid what you think you may make. Jump to 4%. No creeping.