

Cudgels

Board 15
South Deals
N-S Vul

♠ J 10 8 2
♥ 6
♦ 7
♣ A 9 8 6 5 4 3



♠ A K Q 5 4
♥ A Q 4 3
♦ A 6 5
♣ 2

West	North	East	South
2 ♦	4 ♠	Pass	1 ♠
All pass			6 ♠
Lead: ♦ K			

North promised four-card support and a singleton somewhere for his pre-emptive raise to game and you gambled on making a small slam. How do you plan to make twelve tricks after West leads the ♦K and partner produces quite a favorable dummy? Both opponents will follow to the first round of trumps.

Solution:

It may be tempting to try to crossruff for twelve tricks, but that would need a miraculous lie of the unseen cards. Instead, you should aim to set up dummy's club suit. Suppose the full deal is:

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

After winning the first trick with the ♦A, you should play a spade to the ace. Once both defenders follow, you must abandon trumps for the moment and play a club to the ace. After ruffing the second round of clubs with the ♠K, you cross back to dummy with a trump to the ten to ruff another club with the ♠Q. The fact that West has only one club on the given deal makes ruffing clubs with high trumps essential.

Next you play your remaining trump to dummy's jack, drawing West's last trump. Dummy will now hold ♠8 and ♣9865, and you will concede a club to East's king. You will ruff whichever red suit he returns with dummy's remaining trump and claim the contract, as dummy's remaining cards are three club winners.

Another point to consider is that your contract was for twelve rather than thirteen tricks. As you were told that the trumps were not 4-0, this plan catered for clubs being 3-1. If they were 2-2 you would have made all of the tricks on the recommended line.