

When Not to Draw Trump Immediately (Part 2)

Dir: South ♠ 10 4 3 2	
Vul: Both ♥ Q 6 2	
♦ A 9 8 5	
♣ 7 5	
♠ J 8 7 5	♠ Q 9 6
♥ 8 4	♥ 9 7 3
♦ Q J 10	♦ K 6 4 3
♣ K J 9 3	♣ Q 10 8
W N S E N S E W	
♠ A K	
♥ A K J 10 5	
♦ 7 2	
♣ A 6 4 2	
West	North
Pass	2♥
All Pass	Pass
Pass	4♥

Bidding:

South has 19 high card points + 1 point for the 5th heart for 20 total points. This is more than enough to open 1♥. Although the bidding sheet says 2NT would be a good bid with this hand, one further amendment to “no singletons, no voids” would be “no singletons, no voids, *or no 2 doubletons*”. I don’t want to make the bidding sheet too complicated, but just know that this is the reason to open 1♥ instead of 2NT.

North has 6 high card points +1 for the doubleton club for 7 total points with 3 hearts. Therefore the right bid bid is 2♥ which shows 6-9 points and 3 or more hearts.

South now knows that the partnership has enough points for game (anywhere between 26-29 points between the two), so South bids 4♥.

Declarer:

West should lead the top of an honor sequence if possible, so in this case West leads the Q♦ to indicate that they also have the J♦.

The first thing that declarer should do is count their tricks. We see 2 spades, 5 hearts, 1 diamond, and 1 club for 8 total tricks. We need 10 tricks to make 4♥, so we need to find two tricks elsewhere.

South should realize that these two extra tricks will come from ruffing clubs in dummy. To accomplish this, South should play a small club from each hand at trick 2. I like this more than playing A♣ and a club because you keep communication open between the two hands. In this hand, it does not matter, but it can on a different layout.

Once South gives up a club trick, the defense will be able to take their diamond trick. That is okay. Let's say that the defense leads a third diamond (it doesn't matter what they do). At this point we have taken the A♦, lost a club, lost a diamond, and now will trump this third diamond in your hand.

You can now play the A♣ and a third club, ruffing small in dummy. Now lead a spade back to your A♠ so you can lead a fourth club and ruff with the Q♥. You have to ruff high here else East can over-ruff dummy. Since you were able to ruff both clubs, you achieved the two extra tricks you needed.

In 4♥, you will take 2 club ruffs, 1 diamond, 1 club, 5 hearts, and 2 spades for 11 total tricks and make your contract with an overtrick!

Bridge Master
2 D-28

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
Pass	Pass	4♥	4♠

North

4♥ 3♥ 2♥ A♣ 8♣ 7♣ 6♣ 5♣ 4♣ 3♣ 6♦ 5♦ 4♦

West

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

East

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

South

A♠ K♠ Q♠ J♠ 10♠ 9♠ 8♠ 2♣ J♦ 10♦ 9♦ 8♦ 7♦

4♠ S NS 0 EW 0

I took this next hand from BBO's Bridge Master which has a lot of nice declarer play problems.

Bidding:

East preempts 4♥ because he has 8 of them. South bids 4♠ with the solid spades and void in hearts. This isn't a hand that you will see too often because of its wild distribution.

Declarer:

West leads the K♣ and you start with 7 spades and 1 club trick. Here the rest of your tricks that you need will come from the diamond suit. It is a long suit with no high honors. You will lose the A♦, K♦, Q♦, but this will make your J♦ and 10♦ high.

The key to this hand is to play a diamond at trick 2. If you ruff a club or heart to your hand so that you can begin to draw trump, you will not be able to set up the diamonds in time since the trumps split 4-2. A good way to think about why this happens is that you will need to spend 4 of your trumps to draw out all of West's trumps. Then you will need to give up the lead 3 times (A♦, K♦, Q♦). You need all 7 of your trump.

If you waste a trump going to your hand, then after you draw 4 rounds of trump you will only have 2 spades left (1 for getting to South, 4 for drawing trump). Now after you give up the lead the last time for diamonds, you won't have a spade to trump whatever they lead back.

When you lead a diamond at trick 2, you begin to set up diamonds without wasting a valuable spade. Now you can trump whatever East returns, draw all of the trump, then begin setting up diamonds again. You will get 7 spades, 2 diamonds, and 1 club for 10 tricks! The only tricks you will lose are the A♦, K♦, Q♦.

Side Note: You should expect East to have very few spades, diamonds, and clubs, because they showed a lot of hearts. This is why you have to be careful for spades to be 4-2.