



STEP *by* STEP

FEAR OR NECESSITY?

Which of the two suits do you choose?

Clubs because as you have eight cards there (compared to only six in Hearts), the suit is much easier to establish.

Are you sure this contract will make easily?

No, because bad splits can make things difficult for you.

After the King of Diamonds, draw the remaining trumps.

Your trick total will be twelve units with four Spades in your hand, two Diamonds, Ace of Hearts, Ace of Clubs, two high ruffs in dummy and two established Club tricks. Any other line of play would have failed!

Dealer North, N/S Vul.

	♠ Q1042		
	♥ A7653		
	♦ AQ		
	♣ Q2		
	N		
W			E
	S		
	♠ AKJ9		
	♥ 2		
	♦ KJ		
	♣ A108765		

W	North	E	S
	1♥	Pass	2♣
Pass	2♥	Pass	2♠ ⁽¹⁾
Pass	3NT ⁽²⁾	Pass	4♣
Pass	4♦	Pass	4NT
Pass	5♠ ⁽³⁾	Pass	5NT ⁽⁴⁾
Pass	6♠ ⁽⁵⁾		

- (1) Natural or values in Spades
- (2) Four Spades and Diamond stopper(s)
- (3) Two keys and the Queen of trumps.
- (4) Hope for a grand slam.
- (5) No King.

Contract: 6♠.
Entame : ♦10 (the four from East).

Without the Club King in partner's hand, you stopped at the small slam in Spades.

Count your sure and immediate winners

You've certainly counted eight, with four Spades, two Diamonds, Ace of Hearts and Ace of Clubs. You need four more that you'll set up by exploiting either Hearts or Clubs.

In order to prevail, what do you have to postulate?

A "hypothesis of fear", namely that both black suits may break 4-1.

In that case, is there a solution?

Yes, as long as you are very careful.

In which areas?

- › First in that of communications: it's imperative that you take the lead in dummy with the Ace of Diamonds in order to preserve your King as a late entry to your hand and the long suit you want to set up.
- › Then in that of timing: start playing Clubs right at trick two, by playing the two to the Ace and then another Club without first touching trumps: West takes his King while East discards the Diamond four (so Clubs were indeed 4-1...)

Your left hand opponent now switches to the seven of Spades.

What do you do?

You take this trump return in your hand in order to continue establishing your side suit by ruffing two Clubs with the Queen and ten of Spades.

What do you do after these two ruffs?

Come back to your hand with a Diamond. It's very important that you don't shorten your trumps by ruffing a Heart (fear of a 4-1 Spade split).

	♠ Q1042		
	♥ A7653		
	♦ AQ		
	♣ Q2		
	N		
♠ 7			♠ 8653
♥ K104	W		♥ QJ98
♦ 109876			♦ 5432
♣ KJ93		S	♣ 4
	♠ AKJ9		
	♥ 2		
	♦ KJ		
	♣ A108765		

The -PRINCIPLE-

4-4 fits are likely to provide a large number of tricks. But they require declarer to have excellent technical skills:

- › Choice of the base hand (the one that mustn't ruff: here it is South).
- › Hypotheses adapted to the circumstances: hypothesis of "fear" such as, on the occasion of our deal, bad breaks in two suits or, conversely, of "necessity" (We must be optimistic when the contract seems hopeless...).
- › Satisfactory resolution of communications problems (Where should you win trick one? How to cross from one hand to the other?) and timing (In what order does it make sense to play the suits?).