

Trumped in Westwood -- Problem

East Deals  
None Vul

♠ A Q 3  
♥ A 9 8  
♦ A Q 10 6  
♣ 8 7 4



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

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
		3 ♣	Pass
Pass	Dbl	Pass	4 ♥
All pass			
Lead: ♣ J			

West leads the ♣ J to East's Ace, ruffs the club return with the ♥ 4, and leads a diamond. Plan the play.

*Here are some thoughts, if you need help:*

This contract cannot be made without the spade finesse, but you can throw your third spade on the fourth diamond. You can make the contract if you can hold the trumps to one more loser.

How are trumps splitting? If they are now 2-2, then playing the ♥ A and another will suffice. In addition to the ♠ K, West is likely to have the ♥ K. Is there anything that can be done, if trumps don't split?

Trumped in Westwood -- Solution

East Deals  
None Vul

	♠ A Q 3					
	♥ A 9 8					
	♦ A Q 10 6					
	♣ 8 7 4					
♠ K 10 9 6	<table border="1" style="border-collapse: collapse; width: 40px; height: 40px; margin: auto;"> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">N</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">W   E</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">S</td></tr> </table>	N	W   E	S	♠ 8 5 2	
N						
W   E						
S						
♥ K 10 7 4		♥ J				
♦ 8 7 3 2		♦ J 5				
♣ J		♣ A Q 10 9 5 3 2				
	♠ J 7 4					
	♥ Q 6 5 3 2					
	♦ K 9 4					
	♣ K 6					

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
		3 ♣	Pass
Pass	Dbl	Pass	4 ♥
All pass			
Lead: ♣ J			

Win the diamond shift in hand, and table the ♥ Q. If West ducks (an amazing play at a club game), you need to let it ride. Assuming West has the ♥ K, this line works if trumps split or you pin the singleton ♥ J or 10 in the East hand. (One of these singletons is twice as likely as a singleton king.)

Notice that West's diamond exit at trick three was the best available: The ♦ J was going to drop anyhow. A spade exit would have given up a third trick in that suit (the spade finesse must be taken anyhow). A lead from the ♥ K would have been fatal.

- Pete Matthews, Jr.