

Responder Transfers, Jumps to 5 NT -- Problem

Board 2
 East Deals
 N-S Vul



♠ A 7 6
 ♥ A K Q
 ♦ A Q 8 3 2
 ♣ K 3

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
		2 ♣	Pass
2 ♦ ¹	Pass	2 NT ²	Pass
3 ♦ ³	Pass	3 ♥	Pass
5 NT	Pass	?	

1. Waiting: either negative or lacking a good suit.
2. 22-24 HCP.
3. Transfer to hearts.

East had an emergency, and you have been asked to take over. What's your call?

Responder Transfers, Jumps to 5 NT -- Solution

Board 2
East Deals
N-S Vul

♠ Q 10 5 4 2		♠ A 7 6									
♥ 6 4		♥ A K Q									
♦ J 5		♦ A Q 8 3 2									
♣ 10 9 8 2		♣ K 3									
♠ K J 8	<table border="1" style="border-collapse: collapse; width: 40px; height: 40px; margin: 0 auto;"> <tr><td></td><td style="text-align: center;">N</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">W</td><td></td><td style="text-align: center;">E</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td style="text-align: center;">S</td><td></td></tr> </table>		N		W		E		S		♠ 9 3
	N										
W		E									
	S										
♥ J 10 8 5 2		♥ 9 7 3									
♦ 10 9		♦ K 7 6 4									
♣ A J 6		♣ Q 7 5 4									

EW 6N; EW 6♥; EW 6♦; EW 4♠; W 4♣; E 3♣; Par -990

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
		2 ♣	Pass
2 ♦ ¹	Pass	2 NT ²	Pass
3 ♦ ³	Pass	3 ♥	Pass
5 NT	Pass	?	

1. Waiting: either negative or lacking a good suit.
2. 22-24 HCP.
3. Transfer to hearts.

5 NT is forcing and asks you to pick a slam. On these cards, either can be made, but at 6♥ you might ruff a club (or ruff a spade after pitching a club). Holding two hearts and three clubs, you may propose to play 6♦.

The following is standard. As far as I know, all these sequences are equivalent after a 1 NT opening, although responder has more options, employing the extra space.

- 2 NT -
- 4 NT = quantitative, suits up the line if accepting.
- 5 NT = forcing to 6 NT, invites grand slam, suits up the line.
- 6 NT, 7 NT = to play.

So far, so good. Now suppose responder has hearts:

- 4 ♦ = Texas; 4 NT by either asks for keycards. [With this available, there is no need for a grand slam force.]
- 6 NT = to play (see 6 NT below).

- 3 ♦ = Jacoby - 3 ♥ -
- 3 NT = choice of games.
- 4 ♥ = six hearts, mild slam try.
- 4 NT = quantitative, invites choice of slams or the bid of a 5-card suit.
- 5 NT = pick a slam or bid a 5-card suit. Responder could be intending to play at either the six or seven level.
- 6 NT = to play; there is no other standard. Could be responder was hoping for a super-accept and did not get one. Could be a wheel is rolling down the street and pard hopes to stop safely. (Two surveys on bridgewinners.com show many feel this bid is undefined; many feel it is strictly to play (possibly was hoping for a superaccept); some say hoping for a superaccept and opener may choose to bid 7♥; some say six solid hearts or some other specific holding; a few said invites or forces a choice of grand slams.) YMMV.

The Pip II -- Problem

Board 1
 North Deals
 None Vul



♠ 5 3
 ♥ 9 8 7 3
 ♦ 8 3
 ♣ K 10 9 7 5

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
	Pass	1 ♦	Pass
1 ♠	Pass	2 ♥	Pass
3 ♣	Pass	3 ♥	Pass
3 NT	All pass		
3 NT by West			
Lead: ♣ 4			

Partner leads the ♣ 4, fourth highest from length, against West's 3 NT. Your ♣ K holds the first trick. Now what?

Board 1
North Deals
None Vul

The Pip II -- Solution

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

EW 6♥; EW 6♦; EW 4♠; W 3N; E 2N; NS 1♣; Par -980

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
	Pass	1♦	Pass
1♠	Pass	2♥	Pass
3♣	Pass	3♥	Pass
3NT	All pass		
3NT by West			
Lead: ♣ 4			

It would be inexcusable to switch. The correct return is the ♣ 10. This will cash out four or five club tricks for an excellent score. So what's the problem? I fell from grace and returned the ♣ 7, my original fourth highest.

One of my favorite books is *The Complete Book of BOLS Bridge Tips*, edited by (then) Sally Brock. One of my favorites in the book is "Tip for the Pip" by Jose le Dentu. He correctly says that when partner leads a suit against notrump and a singleton appears on dummy, return your highest card from four, and low from five.

The high card lead provides the best chance to pick up the entire suit, when both declarer and partner have four cards: this prevents declarer from ducking your low card into partner's hand. The low return from five cards tells partner (presumably with four cards in the suit) to unblock (and cash out, if possible). With only three cards, declarer cannot duck to advantage. Consider these examples, when partner leads the ♣ 4:

Dummy:	1. ♣ 3	2. ♣ 3
You:	♣ K 10 9 5	♣ K 10 9 5 3
Declarer A:	♣ Q 6 3 2	♣ Q 6 3
Declarer B:	♣ A J 3 2	♣ A J 3

1. If the ♣ K wins, or if it loses and you get in later, return the ♣ 10 to run the suit, ASAP.
2. If the ♣ K wins, or if it loses and you get in later, return the ♣ 3 to run the whole suit, ASAP. This return tells partner the suit will cash out... in 2A, partner should win the jack, cash the ace, and return the ♣ 8.

I'm here to tell you, the Tip for the Pip does not apply when there is a void on dummy, because declarer probably has four cards. Return the top card (♣ 10 here) and worry about the fifth round of the suit later. OOPS, I should have been able to work that out at the table.

For my original "The Pip" problem, with a different twist, see "Four Deals from Warwick" (2018-08-28).