

Matchpoint Play -- Problem

Board 22
North Deals
N-S Vul

♠ A K 7 6
♥ Q 6
♦ Q 10 8 5 2
♣ J 10



♠ Q 3
♥ A K J 7 4 2
♦ J 9 4
♣ A K

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
	1 ♦	Pass	1 ♥
Pass	1 ♠	Pass	2 ♣ ¹
Pass	2 ♦	Pass	3 ♥ ²
Pass	4 ♥	Pass	Pass ³
Pass			

1. Artificial new minor forcing.
2. Forcing to game with at least six hearts.
3. Slam seems unlikely.

4 ♥ by South

Lead: ♣ 4

East covers dummy's card with the queen. Plan the play in a club pairs game. East has four trumps. What might you hope for?

Win the opening lead with the ♣ A, leaving both opponents in doubt as to who holds the king. This is important: this hand is about confusing the opponents.

Draw trumps in four rounds, pitching two diamonds from dummy.

Now lead the ♦ 4 diamond from hand, hoping that West started with ♦ K-7-6-3. Even a good player might throw the king under the singleton ace. West wins the king, but rats, no ace. Wait for it... West leads a spade to East's nine and our queen. Now what?

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Matchpoint Play -- Solution

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♦ Q 10 8 5 2		♦ 7 6									
♣ J 10		♣ Q 7 5 2									
♠ J 10 8 2	<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 5 4
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NS 5N; NS 4♥; NS 5♦; NS 3♠; Par +660: NS 3N+2

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
	1 ♦	Pass	1 ♥
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1. Artificial new minor forcing.
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4 ♥ by South

Lead: ♣ 4

Losing the ♦ K has rectified the count for a possible spade-diamond squeeze. Play off the remaining two trumps and the ♣ K, discarding the last two diamonds from dummy. Dummy has ♠ A-K-7, while we hold ♠ 3 ♦ J-9. West cannot defend both spades and the ♦ A. If the ♦ J is not good, the spades will be.

After the play, West said she feared the ♦ A would get ruffed, so did not cash it. Of course, three rounds of diamonds at the get-go would have held us to 10 tricks. We would, of course, drop the ♦ J on the opening lead, to muddy the waters -- if West does not cash out, the count has been rectified, and our squeeze produces 12 tricks.

This is a crazy hand, because we did not need to fool West: if we can suss out the position, a strip-squeeze works with two losers -- against either opponent guarding both suits. Suppose we don't lead a diamond and just play off all six trumps, producing this position:

♠ A K 7 6 ♦ Q 10

East or West: ♠ J 10 8 2 ♦ A K

♠ Q 3 ♦ J 9 4 ♣ K

When we play the ♣ K (pitching a diamond from dummy), The busy opponent (West here) cannot pitch a spade and thus pitches a diamond honor. A diamond lead establishes our twelfth trick.