

BRIDGE MAGAZINE

DECLARER PLAY QUIZ - Jan 2016 - original - [Here](#)

By David Huggett

1.

♠ 7	♠ 3 2	♠ Q 9 8 6
♥ A 9 8 2	♥ K 6	♥ 10 5 4 3
♦ 10 8 4 2	♦ Q J 9 7 3	♦ 6 5
♣ Q 8 3 2	♣ A K 10 9	♣ J 7 4

N
E  
W
S

♠ A K J 10 5 4	♠ A J 10
♥ Q J 7	♥ Q J 10 9 7 6
♦ A K	♦ 7 4
♣ 6 5	♣ K Q

You are declarer in 6♠ and West leads the ♥A and follows with a low heart. How do you plan the play?

The slam is reasonable enough, but there is a common misconception about how to play the trump suit. It is easy to think that a 'safety play' of playing a top trump from hand first is in order to guard against a singleton queen in the West hand, but this is sloppy reasoning.

Certainly you cannot afford to lose a trump trick, but if West does have a singleton it is four times more likely to be a low card than the queen. Accordingly you simply have to take two finesses against the queen to guard against that 4-1 break.

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2.

♠ Q 8 4	♠ K 5 2	♠ 9 7 6 3
♥ A 5	♥ K 8 2	♥ 4 3
♦ K Q J 9 2	♦ A 8 5	♦ 10 6 3
♣ 8 6 4	♣ 9 7 5 3	♣ A J 10 2

N
E  
W
S

♠ A J 10	♠ A J 10
♥ Q J 10 9 7 6	♥ Q J 10 9 7 6
♦ 7 4	♦ 7 4
♣ K Q	♣ K Q

You are declarer in 4♥ after West had opened 1NT (12-14). West leads the ♦K. How do you plan the play?

You have to lose a trump, a diamond and a club so the problem revolves around not losing a spade trick and, in order to work out who has the queen in that suit, you must fish around. You know that West has 12-14 points so your first move must be to win the opening lead and play on trumps. When you do, you find that it is West who has the ace. Doubtless, he will try and cash some diamonds but you ruff the third round, draw trumps and play on clubs - just to see who has the ace. If it is West, he cannot have the queen of spades as well and if it is East he cannot have it. Furthermore, if it was East who had the ace of trumps then you know that West has the queen of spades.