

**Board 12**  
West Deals  
N-S Vul

Careful Play -- Problem

♠ K Q J 6  
♥ K 7 2  
♦ 10  
♣ K J 9 6 3



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

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

All pass  
4 ♥ by South  
Lead: ♠ 3  
Down 1 — NS -100

Lou Kelleher and I played the most amazing session together. I held an average of 11 high card points per hand. While that is unusual, Lou averaged 12.2 HCP! I had my bidding shoes on and declared 14 hands; Lou played 5 and the opponents 5 (making only one contract).

Getting good cards is a particular advantage for a good declarer in a mixed field such as a club game. Mostly I took advantage of this good fortune, but I took a nap on this deal. See if you can do better.

West leads the ♠ 3, and East captures the king with the ace. East returns the ♠ 8, West following with the ♠ 2.

Plan the play before proceeding.

Suppose you overtake the ♠ 9 in dummy to lead a trump. Both opponents play small trumps, and your queen wins. What now?

**Board 12**  
 West Deals  
 N-S Vul

Careful Play -- Solution

<p>♠ 3 2          ♥ 10 9 6          ♦ Q J 8 6 3          ♣ A 8 4</p>		<p>♠ K Q J 6          ♥ K 7 2          ♦ 10          ♣ K J 9 6 3</p>	<p>♠ A 10 8 5 4          ♥ A 3          ♦ 9 7 2          ♣ 10 7 5</p> <p>♠ 9 7          ♥ Q J 8 5 4          ♦ A K 5 4          ♣ Q 2</p>
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NS 4♥; NS 3N; NS 2♠; NS 3♣; NS 1♦; Par +620

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

All pass  
 4♥ by South  
 Down 1 — NS -100

Care is required to prevent West from getting a trump promotion. I forgot the bidding, and won the easy ♠ 9 in hand. It was no longer possible to make the contract. East won my ♥ Q lead and produced a spade. I woke up and gave it my best shot, discarding the ♣ Q as East ruffed. West exited safely with the DQ, fearful that the ♣ A would not cash.

A trump to dummy's king drew the remaining trumps. Now for my last chance, I led the ♣ K and let it ride, dumping a diamond loser. Down 1 (the other small diamond gets ruffed).

The winning play is to win that spade on dummy at trick two, and lead the ♥ 2. If East pops up with the ace and leads a spade, now declarer can afford to ruff high. Because the ♣ A is with West, East never gets to lead a fourth round of spades.

Care is still required: the third club must be established while the ♥ K remains on dummy as an entry.

If East ducks the first trump, the play is trickier still. The contract can always be set if the ♥ K is not an entry to the established club and spade winners.

West, looking for a ruff, would only duck the ♥ A from three cards. If that is the case, leading another trump should be fatal, as West can win and lead a third round before the club is established. Furthermore, that means East has the ♣ A, an entry for the trump promotion, if declarer attacks clubs first.

The only play that can work is the one that does: play a small heart from both hands at trick four, felling the ace, and preserving both a high trump in hand (to ruff the spade return) and an entry to dummy.

Had I played correctly to the second trick, would I have found this play to make the contract? Maybe. Did you?

**Board 17**  
 North Deals  
 None Vul

Penalty Card

♠ K 10 5 4  
 ♥ J  
 ♦ Q 10 8 6 2  
 ♣ Q 5 2

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



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

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

EW 4♥; NS 4♦; EW 4♣; EW 2♠; Par -100; NS 5♦×-1

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
	Pass	1 ♠	2 ♦
Dbl	4 ♦	4 ♥	Pass
Pass	5 ♦	All pass	

5 ♦ by South

Lead: ♠ 7

Made 5 — NS +400

Contemplating the opening lead of the ♠ 7, I saw three top losers: one heart and two clubs. Dummy followed with the 4, East with an honor, and I won the ace. The ♦ A drew the outstanding trumps. With little of any significance to do, I led the ♠ 9. West played the ♣ 8 on this - a signal - but a round too early. This play was corrected to the ♠ 6, the ♣ 8 remaining on the table as a major penalty card.

This gave me the chance to wager an extra 50-point undertrick against the chance East would hold the ♥ A and give me the contract. I called for a small spade from dummy, and, when East won the trick, called the director.

Now, I know my options in this situation, but no way I was going to explain anything here. The director explained my options and I chose that East not lead a club. The director carefully and correctly explained that East must not lead a club *as long as she held the lead*.

East led the ♥ A, and the hand was over. She said, "now may I lead a club?" I could not hold onto an emphatic "no!" Both my losing clubs went on dummy's spade winners. East is in a tough spot, but has to lead a small heart to set the contract.

Should I have taken advantage of these folks? Definitely. Mistakes of all kinds are part of the game.