Red Suits [1]

North Deals
E-W Vul

♠ 10
♡ A 9 8 6
♢ K 9 8 6 3 2
♣ K 7

	N	
W		E
	S	

♠ 7 6
♡ K 10 7 4 3
♢ A J 5
♣ A 9 5

West	North	East	South
	Pass	Pass	1 ♡
1 ♠	2 ♠[1]	3 ♠	Pass
Pass	4 ♢[2]	Pass	4 ♡
All pass			

1. Heart support, invitational or better.
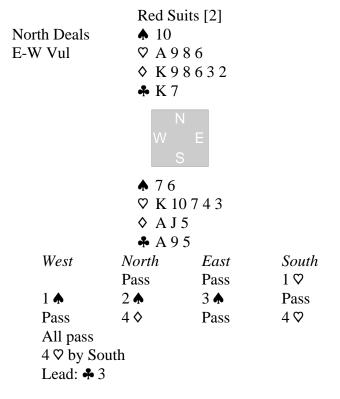2. In case they bid 4 ♠, you should know I have diamonds.

4 ♡ by South
Lead: ♣ 3

Join me as South during a matchpoint pairs game on BBO. The opponents lead fourth highest from length.

How do you think the cards lie?
What should be our plan?

Red Suits [2]

North Deals
E-W Vul

♠ 10
♡ A 9 8 6
♢ K 9 8 6 3 2
♣ K 7

	N	
W		E
	S	

♠ 7 6
♡ K 10 7 4 3
♢ A J 5
♣ A 9 5

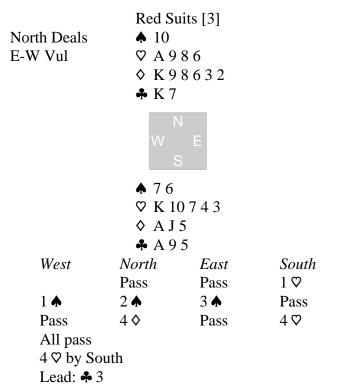| West	North	East	South
	Pass	Pass	1 ♡
1 ♠	2 ♠	3 ♠	Pass
Pass	4 ♢	Pass	4 ♡
All pass			

4 ♡ by South
Lead: ♣ 3

West probably has the ♠ A -- otherwise, a spade would probably have been led. This information is not particularly relevant to this deal, but it could be another time.

The opponents have bid a lot, at unfavorable vulnerability, without that many points, so suits are probably not splitting well. The opponents have three points in hearts, yet East jumped in spades, so East is more likely to be short in hearts.

If the ♣ 3 is from three or four cards, West is therefore likely to be short in diamonds.

The general plan should be to draw trumps and run the diamond suit.

What do you play to the first three tricks? Why?

Red Suits [3]

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North Deals        ♠ 10
E-W Vul            ♡ A 9 8 6
                   ◊ K 9 8 6 3 2
                   ♣ K 7
                        N
                   W         E
                        S
                   ♠ 7 6
                   ♡ K 10 7 4 3
                   ◊ A J 5
                   ♣ A 9 5
```

West	North	East	South
	Pass	Pass	1 ♡
1 ♠	2 ♠	3 ♠	Pass
Pass	4 ◊	Pass	4 ♡
All pass			

4 ♡ by South
Lead: ♣ 3

Since the plan includes establishing the diamond suit, general principles say to retain the ♣ K on dummy -- win the ace in hand.
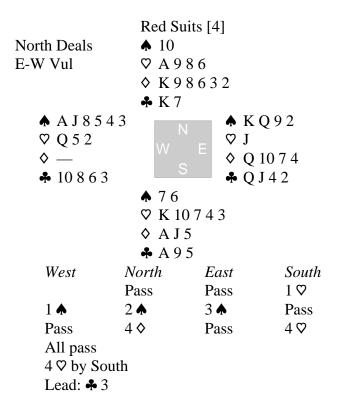
Start trumps, using our best guess as to which opponent is short in the suit. Since that is East, we cash the ♡ K, on which East deposits the jack. Now what?

Lead a trump to dummy and finesse, East showing out. Why finesse? Because the odds are at least two to one in favor of it! The rule of *restricted choice* says that East, having played a quack, had no choice which quack to play.

From another angle: West should have two quacks about one time in four, no quacks one time, and one quack two times. When one quack appears in East, the other quack does not jump around. One of the four cases is gone; of the other three cases, the other quack will be with West two times. Plus, East is probably short, improving the odds.

The intent to take this finesse is why we cashed the ♡ K first, and not the ace.

Draw the last trump, with the ♡ A on dummy. Now what?

Red Suits [4]

```
North Deals              ♠ 10
E-W Vul                  ♡ A 9 8 6
                         ◊ K 9 8 6 3 2
                         ♣ K 7
♠ A J 8 5 4 3                        ♠ K Q 9 2
♡ Q 5 2            N                 ♡ J
◊ —          W          E            ◊ Q 10 7 4
♣ 10 8 6 3               S           ♣ Q J 4 2
                         ♠ 7 6
                         ♡ K 10 7 4 3
                         ◊ A J 5
                         ♣ A 9 5
```

West	North	East	South
	Pass	Pass	1 ♡
1 ♠	2 ♠	3 ♠	Pass
Pass	4 ◊	Pass	4 ♡
All pass			

4 ♡ by South
Lead: ♣ 3

We plan to finesse in diamonds. East has the diamond length, remember? Cash the ◊ K first (West showing out), just in case West has a singleton queen. Finesse, cash the ◊ A, enter dummy with the ♣ K, and ruff the diamonds good. Return to dummy by ruffing the last club and discard two spades on the good diamonds -- making seven!

The same result can be obtained, as the cards lie, if the ♣ K wins the first trick. Play exactly the same way, up to winning the third round of trump on dummy. Now we must take an immediate finesse in diamonds, using the ◊ K as one of the two entries required to clear and enjoy the diamond suit.

4 ♠ can only be set if we obtain a club ruff. With the diamond fit, South should push on to 5 ♡.

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A risky opening lead, perhaps warranted, would have been the ♠ 8. Upon winning the ♠ Q, East should return a diamond for West to ruff.

North has 20 Bergen points (10 fine, well-located high card points, plus 10 cards in the two longest suits), so should have opened 1 ◊.