

Everything Is Wrong -- Problem

Board 5

West Deals

E-W Vul

♠ 7
♥ 7 4
♦ A Q 8 4 2
♣ A K 10 6 5



♠ K Q 8 6
♥ A K Q 10 5
♦ K 6
♣ Q 3

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
Pass	1 ♦	Pass	1 ♥
Pass	2 ♣	Pass	2 ♠ ¹
Pass	3 ♣	Pass	4 NT ²
Pass	6 NT	All pass	

1. Artificial game force.
2. Quantitative (no suit is trump).

Playing in an online matchpoint pairs game, we reach this aggressive slam. Many declarers at slams in a pairs game can take 13 tricks when they get in. After some deliberation, West produces the ♠ A. This insures against an overtrick, at the cost of reducing the chance of setting the contract. At IMPs, West would probably lead something else.

East discourages, so West shifts to the ♦ 9. We win in hand, cash the ♥ A and lead a second diamond. West discards a spade. What should be our line of play from here? What are the keys to success?

Everything Is Wrong -- Solution

<p>♠ 9 4</p> <p>♥ J 8 3</p> <p>♦ —</p> <p>♣ J 9 8 2</p>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: 60px; margin: 0 auto;"> <div style="text-align: center;">N</div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> WE </div> <div style="text-align: center;">S</div> </div>	<p>♠ —</p> <p>♥ 7</p> <p>♦ Q 8 4</p> <p>♣ A K 10 6 5</p>	<p>♠ J 10 5</p> <p>♥ 9</p> <p>♦ J 10 7</p> <p>♣ 7 4</p>
---	---	--	---

♠ K Q 8
 ♥ K Q 10 5
 ♦ —
 ♣ Q 3

6 NT by South

6 NT can always be made by guessing to finesse in clubs. However, for our purposes, if we finesse, the ♣ J will magically appear in the East hand.

We have two spades, three hearts, three diamonds, and three clubs: 11 tricks, and we need all twelve of those that remain. The first thing to consider when confronted with a one-loser situation is a squeeze. This is an unusual squeeze with threats in all four suits! Double winners in both clubs and hearts super-power the squeeze, creating space for two threats in South (♠ 8 and ♥ 10) and in North (♦ 8 and ♣ 10). If we get it right, the only lie of the cards that defeats the squeeze is when East controls both minors and West controls both majors, all behind our threats. Notice that West already had to give up in spades.

This squeeze is automatic, but *we must watch all four suits to see if our threats are good*. Well, it's only automatic if we cash the ♦ Q, discarding the ♥ 5, before leaving dummy, since we have no entry in the diamond suit. We return to hand with the ♣ Q and cash one spade, pitching the ♦ 4, leaving:

<p>♠ --</p> <p>♥ J 8 3</p> <p>♦ --</p> <p>♣ J 9 8</p>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: 60px; margin: 0 auto;"> <div style="text-align: center;">N</div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> WE </div> <div style="text-align: center;">S</div> </div>	<p>♠ J 10</p> <p>♥ --</p> <p>♦ J 10 7</p> <p>♣ 7</p>	<p>♠ Q 8</p> <p>♥ K Q 10</p> <p>♦ --</p> <p>♣ 3</p>
---	---	--	---

On the play of the ♠ Q (discarding ♣ 6), West is dead, but to extend the battle, they discard a heart. We go to dummy with the ♣ A and lead the ♣ K. West has the ♣ J, but down to three cards, has at most two hearts left. East has the ♦ J, so has at most two hearts left. It's no longer relevant, but we have not seen the ♠ J, so the ♠ 8 is an easy discard. We play our hearts from the top -- they must be good.

This is a nifty deal.