

Dealer: W
Vul: All

♠ AQ108
♥ QJ
♦ 9
♣ AKJ652

♠ KJ752
♥ 9853
♦ Q74
♣ 8

W	N	E	S
P	1C	P	1S
X (1)	4S	P	P
P			

(1) Takeout double with the red suits

4S by South. The opening lead is the CQ – assume this is a singleton. What is the best line of play?

Declarer Play 12 – Counting Losers from Dummy and Setting Up a Long Suit

Dealer: W

Vul: All

	♠ AQ108		
	♥ QJ		
	♦ 9		
	♣ AKJ652		
♠ 643			♠ 9
♥ K1076			♥ A42
♦ AJ1082			♦ K653
♣ Q			♣ 109743
	♠ KJ752		
	♥ 9853		
	♦ Q74		
	♣ 8		

W	N	E	S
P	1C	P	1S
X (1)	4S	P	P
P			

(2) Takeout double with the red suits

4S by South. The opening lead is the CQ – assume this is a singleton. What is the best line of play?

With suit contracts, your first step is to count losers. Normally you do this from your hand, though sometimes from dummy if dummy has the longest trumps. Dummy usually has the longest trumps if you've had a transfer in the bidding.

However, when both hands have 4 or more trumps, you can count losers from either hand. In these situations, if I'm getting no joy from my hand, I mentally go across to dummy and see if that helps. Usually, the hand with the most points is the better hand to count losers from.

Counting losers from dummy on this hand points the way to a simple and elegant solution. Trumps have no losers, but there are 3 inescapable red suit losers – 2 hearts and a diamond. We can afford no losers in clubs. Can the club suit be brought home for no losers? Yes! Despite the 5-1 break, if you ruff 2 clubs high in your hand (to prevent an overruff) you can set up the sixth club.

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♥ K1076		♥ A42
♦ AJ1082		♦ K653
♣ Q		♣ 109743
	♠ KJ752	
	♥ 9853	
	♦ Q74	
	♣ 8	

(Hand repeated for convenience)

Notice you can't draw trumps first. Trumps are your entry back to the club suit. So:

1. Win the CQ with the CA and ruff a club with the SK
2. Go back to dummy with the SA and ruff another club with the SJ
3. Go back to dummy with the SQ and draw another trump if you have to
4. Play the now running clubs and give up the 3 red suit losers at the end.

This line of play works if trumps are 2-2 or 3-1 (about a 90% chance). You can also handle a 4-0 trump break if West holds them (unlikely on the bidding). When you go back to dummy with the SA, you will notice if East shows out. Next time you to return to dummy in trumps you can finesse the S8 and avoid a trump loser at the end.