

♠ A10
♥ K
♦ A109643
♣ A1074

You pick up this hand and you hear partner open the bidding 1NT. You announce 15-17.

You raise your nose up in the air and you sniff SLAM.

There are several phases to your thought process. Since we are all “experts” we are going to make a thorough analysis of the availability of a slam and possibly a grand slam.

1. You are interested to find out if your partner has at least an honor 3rd or 4 pieces in the diamond suit. You play 4 way transfers whereby 2♣ is a transfer to clubs and 2NT is a transfer to diamonds. If the NT opener has 3 pieces to an honor or 4 any pieces than partner will accept the transfer by bidding the suit. So you bid 2NT and partner accepts by bidding 3♦.

S	W	N	E
1NT	P	2♣	P
3♦	P		

2. So now you bid 4NT asking for keycards. (This asks partner for all A's and the K♦.)

5♣=0-3

5♦=1-4

5♥=2 without the Q♦

5♠=2 with the Q♦

S	W	N	E
1NT	P	2♣	P
3♦	P	4NT	P
5♠	p		

Partner bids 5♠ showing 2 keycards with the Q♦.

3. Since you have 3 A's, you now know that you have all of the Keycards with ♦ as the asking suit. You have now accounted for **9 high card points** of the 15 to 17 hcp's in partner's hand. You sniff the air again, and that SLAM odor is stronger.

Let's now ask partner for K's as there is a possibility of bidding a GRAND SLAM. If partner has 2 kings than the GRAND SLAM is probably there. But if partner does not have 2 kings, we are going to play in 6♦ or 6NT. With 6-8 more points in partner's hand, there is a great chance of at least 1 king and probably at least 1 or 2 Q's.

S	W	N	E
1NT	P	2♠	P
3♦	P	4NT	P
5♠	P	5NT	P
6♥	p		

4. Partner shows the other 2 kings which now give you all the A's and all of the K's. You can count 6♦'s, 2♥'s, 2♠'s, and 2♣'s for 12 tricks off the top. This also accounts for 15 points for partner. There is room for a Q, a J, or 2 J's in partner's hand. You have a very good game going and you need just an average to win so you bid 6NT. If partner showed only 1 king, you would probably opt for the safer 6♦ contract as pard would respond 6♦ to your 5NT asking bid and you would pass.
5. But you are playing in a team game (swiss or knockout event) and your team is in 2nd place, down 3 points going into this last round against the team in 1st place. You are on the last board and the rest of the boards played in this round are probably average boards. You know that your opponents are going to be in 6NT. You **MUST** bid this GRAND SLAM to win the event. Go down and you are still guaranteed 2nd place. If pard has a Q♠, Q♥, OR Q♣, the Grand is cold. If Pard has the J♠ OR J♣, the Grand is on a finesse. A third scenario is that if Pard has a long club suit or even K♣ doubleton, there is another good chance for the Grand.
6. So you bid the Grand; It rolls; and your team wins the Swiss Event. Congratulations!!!

S	W	N	E
1NT	P	2♠	P
3♦	P	4NT	P
5♠	P	5NT	P
6♥	p	7♦	P
P	p		

This hand was recently played at a Charity Event in the Clubs.

My partner and I got to the Grand. We use MinorWood Keycard and our bidding went as follows.

S	W	N	E
1NT	P	2♠	P
3♦	P	4♦	P
5♣	P	5♥	P
5♠	p	6♣	P
6♠	p	7♦	P
P	p		

4♦ is keycard in diamonds

5♣ are 2 keycards and the Q♦

5♥ Please bid your cheapest K

5♠ my cheapest K

6♣ Do you have the K♣?

6♠ Yes, I have the K♣ and the Q♠

7♦ I can count to 13.

This hand came up in our last round of this Charity game and I thought that we were far enough ahead in the event that I would give my partner a good workout with our bidding system. Pard hedged a bit with her 3♦ bid as this usually promises at least 3 or 4 cards with at least an honor in the 3 card support. Fortunately Diamonds broke 3-2. If they did not break well, there is still a chance of making the 7♦ with a “trump coup”. (Next lesson)

♠ A10
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♠ KQ72
♥ A84
♦ KQ
♣ K863