

# Learning Points – GNTQ Strips and End Plays and Bad Trump Splits

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LEVEL: Intermediate/Advanced

## E Deals

♠ xx  
♥ KQxx  
♦ Qxx  
♣ A9xx

Jim

## NS Vul

Spot Cards  
Approximate

Saturday January 31, 2009. Flight B Grand National Team Qualifying Round, District 11, CBA Bridge Center, 2860 Cooper Road, Cincinnati, OH 45241 (513) 631-8070. Thanks to our teammates Rob Weidenfeld and Jim Edmiston.

♠		N	♠
♥			♥
♦	W 18	E	♦
♣		S	♣

Our teammates found an outstanding way to beat a 4-0 trump split and make a thin game. 11 HCP opposite 13 HCP games often need some help. Reading the cards accurately improves declarer's chances. IMPs incentivizes games like this one.

♠ Jxx  
♥ A108xx  
♦ AJ6  
♣ K10

Rob

## Bidding

Rob and Jim use 2/1 Game Forcing. Even if Rob bid only 3♥, Jim would likely pursue the game given the trump length and ♠ shortness.

East	South	West	North
1♠	2♥	Pass	2♠ <sup>1</sup>
Pass	4♥ <sup>2</sup>	Passed Out	

**The Play** South can count 8 winners (5♥, 1♦, and 2♣) off the top. Prospects for additional tricks can come from ruffing ♣ in hand (dummy reversal). The ♠ lead means 2 immediate losers. South might have 2 ♦ loses and perhaps a ♥ loser if ♥ split 4-0. 5 possible losers is not a good sign. In with the ♠K, West cleared the ♠ as North ruffed low. A small ♣ to the ♣K then the ♣10 toward the table (covered by West's ♣J) won by North's ♣A. Declarer played a low ♣ ruffed low and a small trump to the dummy's ♥K noting the small ♠ from East. Trumps were indeed 4-0. Missing ♥J9xx one loser is assured. Undeterred, declarer played the ♣9 ruffed low in hand, East pitching a ♦. A small ♥ to the ♥Q allowed the ♦ finesse (low to the ♦J). This succeeded as expected - after all East opened the bidding. Declarer cashed the ♦A completing the strip of West's hand. Down to the ♥A108, declarer led the ♥8 won by East with the ♥9. East was end played. South was now in command holding ♥A10 over East's ♥Jx. All in all South lost 1♥ and 2♠. 4♥+4 for +620 earned 3 IMPS as teammates came to the table with a -500 sacrifice.

West Leads ♠x

1 = Invitational or Better ♥ raise.

2 = Accepts invitation.

**Post Mortem**  
In adverse circumstances, hope distribution is on your side. South eliminated all of West's out cards (the Strip) and threw West in at trick 11 (the End Play) preserving a valuable tenace in trumps.

At IMPS we strive to bid vulnerable games that are 38% chance or better. Why? Ignoring equal results at both tables, IMP scoring guides what risk we should take:

	<u>Our Score</u>	<u>Their Score</u>	<u>Net Score</u>	<u>IMPS</u>
<b><u>Vulnerable</u></b>				
We bid and make, they make a partial.	+620	-170	+450	+10
We bid and fail, they make their partial	-100	-140	-240	-6
<b><u>Nonvulnerable</u></b>				
We bid and make, they make a partial.	+420	-170	+250	+6
We bid and fail, they make their partial	-50	-140	-190	-5

For nonvulnerable games, risk and reward are about equal, so a 55% chance is adequate. Vulnerable games offer 5:3 payoff odds. This means that Vulnerable games with odds no worse than 3:5 are a breakeven proposition (net 0 over time). That translates to 37.5% risk [for example, 2% points better than a 3-3 break when you hold a 5-2 suit (35.5%)]. Risk exceeds expected value only in dire circumstances.

## Learning Pointers:

- 1) See a bad trump split as an opportunity – look for ways to strip and end play the opponent with long trumps.
- 2) Bid those close Vulnerable games at IMPS. Bid those 50% or 1 finesse non-vulnerable games too. Make them by reading the cards well and using what you know.