

A CHIP OFF THE OLD BLOCK

You are South in 3NT. The auction couldn't have been simpler: 1NT -3NT. West leads the ♣10 and your partner faces this dummy:

	North	
	♠J6	
	♥Q4	
	♦AKQ43	
	♣7643	
West		East
♣10		
	South	
	♠AK5	
	♥AJ75	
	♦10986	
	♣AJ	

East wins the ♣K and sends back another club, which you win. You need 8 more tricks. You have 2 spades, 1 heart, and 3 diamonds. You need diamonds to break no worse than 3-1 so you make take the two small diamonds in the dummy for your last two tricks. However, you notice that the diamonds will become blocked. You will win the 4th diamond trick in your hand and you won't be able to access the dummy for your last diamond trick. Is there anything you can do?

Since East started with at least 2 clubs, West can't have started with any more than 5 clubs. You've already won 1 of them so you can afford to lose 4 clubs. Test the diamonds and when both opponents follow to the first diamond lead to the dummy, exit with a club. West will take his four clubs and you will discard one of your diamonds on those clubs. Eventually he will have to change suit which you will win and now you can safely run all five diamonds for a total of 9 tricks.

This is the entire hand:

<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; display: inline-block;">11</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; display: inline-block;">D</div>	N North ♠ J6 ♥ Q4 ♦ AKQ43 ♣ 7643	<table border="1"> <tr> <th>W</th> <th>N</th> <th>E</th> <th>S</th> </tr> <tr> <td>P</td> <td>3NT</td> <td>P</td> <td>1NT</td> </tr> <tr> <td>P</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td>P</td> </tr> </table>	W	N	E	S	P	3NT	P	1NT	P			P
	W	N	E	S										
	P	3NT	P	1NT										
	P			P										
W West ♠ 9432 ♥ K32 ♦ 2 ♣ Q10982		E East ♠ Q1087 ♥ 10986 ♦ J75 ♣ K5												
	S South ♠ AK5 ♥ AJ75 ♦ 10986 ♣ AJ													
		3NT S NS: 0 EW: 0												

Sometimes giving the opponents their tricks allow you to discard the cards that are blocking the suit you want to set up.

You can see how this hand should be played by clicking on this link: <http://tinyurl.com/oerdysv> or copy and paste it into your browser. Click on the "Next" button on the bottom to advance through each trick. Alternatively, by clicking on "Play" you can play all four hands and see if you can make the hand on your own.