

♠♥♦♣ A STROKE OF LUCK ♠♥♦♣

Your partner is the dealer and opens 1♦. Your opponents pass throughout and this is your hand

S	South
♠	A763
♥	J83
♦	42
♣	A752

You respond 1♠ and partner rebids 2♦. You are nervous about the heart suit, but you rebid 2NT. Partner raises you to 3NT. West leads the ♥5 and you see this dummy:

N	North
♠	Q4
♥	AK
♦	AQ8765
♣	863

West leads ♥5.

S	South
♠	A763
♥	J83
♦	42
♣	A752

You are thankful for the heart stoppers, but you can count only 5 top tricks. You need 4 more and they must come from diamonds. How do you propose to make your contract?

The first requirement is that the ♦K is on your right. But even if it is, you have a transportation problem. If you lead up to the ♦Q and it wins, you will have to lose a diamond eventually. Now you have no way to get back to the dummy before the opponents clear the heart suit.

The solution comes up a lot when you have a long suit in the dummy and no outside entries. You simply duck the first diamond. The defenders will take out your last heart stopper, but you will go back to your hand with the ♠A or

♣A and lead up to the ♦Q. If they both follow suit, you clear the diamonds and you can take 5 diamonds in total.

It's true, that if the ♦K10 were in East, you wouldn't take any diamonds, not even the ♦A because there is no way to access it. You would go down 5 tricks. But that is what make this game of bridge so much fun. There is a lot of skill, as in this hand; but also, a fair amount of luck!

Look at the entire deal:

D		N North		W	N	E	S
1		♠ Q4			1♦	P	1♠
		♥ AK		P	2♦	P	2NT
		♦ AQ8765		P	3NT	P	P
		♣ 863		P			
W West			E East				
♠ J92			♠ K1085				
♥ Q10754			♥ 962				
♦ K103			♦ J9				
♣ KQ			♣ J1094				
		S South					
		♠ A763					
		♥ J83					
		♦ 42					
		♣ A752					
				3NT S		NS: 0 EW: 0	

You can see how this hand should be played by clicking on this link:

<http://tinyurl.com/y5y92n9o>, 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.

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